

THE
MORAL ASPECTS OF MEDICAL LIFE.

G. AND J. ADLARD, PRINTERS, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

THE
MORAL ASPECTS
OF
MEDICAL LIFE,

CONSISTING OF THE
'AKESIOS' OF PROFESSOR K. F. H. MARX.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

WITH
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES AND ILLUSTRATIVE REMARKS.

BY
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LONDON:
JOHN CHURCHILL, PRINCES STREET, SOHO.

MDCCCXLVI.

7060

“ Nous le disons avec conviction, élevez le médecin le plus que vous pourrez, élevez-le à ses propres yeux, élevez-le aux yeux de ses concitoyens, car sa mission est sainte, car elle suppose le plus absolu dévouement ; car il faut qu’il ait une haute idée de l’humanité pour comprendre ce que vaut la vie de l’homme.”—SIMON.

TO

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON, M.D. F.R.S.

&c. &c.

WHO, IN HIS INTERCOURSE WITH HIS BRETHREN AND THE
PUBLIC, HAS, DURING A LONG PROFESSIONAL CAREER,
HONORABLY EXEMPLIFIED THE PRINCIPLES MAIN-
TAINED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES,

This Work is Inscribed,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF GENUINE ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,
BY HIS OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL FRIEND,

JAMES MACKNESS.

PREFACE.

“ IT is somewhat remarkable that, although the aspect and condition of the medical profession in this country has undergone such an entire revolution within the last twenty or thirty years, we should have no later works on the subject (of medical ethics) than Dr. Gregory's ‘Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician,’ published upwards of seventy years since, and Dr. Percival's ‘Medical Ethics,’ published at the commencement of the present century.” * Many excellent maxims and remarks on the moral bearings of our profession have indeed, from time to time, appeared in lectures and periodical essays, mingled with other matter, but on the whole we may, I think, affirm that the subject has received less attention in this country than any other branch of medical literature; and a complete work on medical ethics, suited to the wants of the present age, is still a desideratum. Our

* Dr. Sibbald's address, at the anniversary meeting of the South-eastern Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, June, 1842.

continental neighbours have, in this respect, anticipated us. The 'Déontologie Médicale' of Dr. Maximilian Simon is a truly valuable work; and though, of course, adapted primarily to French society and morals, it is calculated to confer great benefits on the profession. Professor Sava, of Milan, has also published a work on the 'Deserts and Duties of the Physician,' containing much important and interesting matter. The 'Akesios' of Professor Marx is a production of a different stamp to either of those just mentioned; it deals not so much in direct instruction, as in *vivid pictures*, and sparks as it were struck out at random, and tending to elicit thought and awaken inquiry. It consists of Letters, twelve in number, addressed to eminent *deceased* members of the medical profession; the subject of each Letter being selected with reference to certain circumstances in their character or history. It is a work which bears the ineffaceable impress of original genius—reminding us occasionally of Landor's 'Imaginary Conversations;' but having a character all its own, and one supported throughout with infinite spirit and consistency.

Our first intention, with regard to this work, was simply to translate it, but as we proceeded to scan it line by line, we were struck with its remarkable condensation of style, and with the germs of noble thought which often lay

buried in a single sentence. We felt inclined, instead of the rapid “glance” (Blicke) which the writer permits us to take of certain interesting subjects, to detain these subjects somewhat longer before the mind, to view them on all sides; to compare, to contrast, to illustrate them, and thus, as we hoped, to extend their influence and deepen their impression. In the prosecution of our design, we have been less anxious to detain the reader with long comments of our own, than to bring together the best of what other men—men of different times and minds—have written on the same subjects; to illustrate one by the other, and where conflicting opinions might arise, to hold the balance between them.

As many of the individuals to whom the Letters are addressed were foreigners, and not familiarly known to the English reader, and as even with regard to those characters well known, it adds much to the interest and intelligibility of the Letters to have their histories immediately present to the mind, we determined to affix a biographical notice to each Letter, taking pains with regard to those whose memoirs have not been published in English, to have such notice as full and complete as possible. In the case of Stieglitz a difficulty arose, for in no work which the writer consulted could any account of him be found;

nor was this surprising, since it appears from the interesting memorial which Professor Marx has just given to the world, that, when in England, the professor was astonished to find the English public so little acquainted with his name and writings. In this position the writer had recourse to Professor Marx himself, who most kindly and promptly responded to the appeal by supplying the sketch, of which ours is a translation, and the original of which will be found in the ‘Andenken.’ *

In conclusion, we would say—this work makes no pretension to be considered *a complete treatise* on medical ethics. It is but a small contribution towards the elucidation of a subject requiring the united labour of many minds, and if by it abler pens should be stirred up to supply the desideratum, the Writer will rejoice that—

“Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.”

J. M.

HASTINGS, Sept. 21st, 1846.

* Zum Andenken an Johann Stieglitz. Göttingen, 1846, page 3.

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THE
MORAL ASPECTS OF MEDICAL LIFE.

PREFACE TO 'AKESIOS.' *

“*Ἀκέσιος*, or the Healer, was one of the names by which the Greeks designated the demigod whom the Egyptians called Harpocrates. His birth, which was placed in the winter solstice, indicated the feebleness of the wintry sun, whilst it left hopes, also, of his return in spring, to spread new life. Thus was the god at once an emblem of the infirmities of the sick, and of their hopes of recovery. He was also depicted holding his finger to his lips, symbolizing that sacred silence concerning the mysteries of medicine ever required of the initiated.

“I restrict myself, in the following pages, to the former cheering and consolatory symbol. This work is designed to discuss weighty points in the healing art as it now exists. As to mysteries,—if, in fact, there be properly any such in medicine,—they will not here be unravelled.

* *Akesios* ; *Blicke in die ethischen Beziehungen der Medicin*, von K. F. H. Marx. Göttingen, 1844.

I deal not in this work with systems of healing, or methods of treatment;—no, what dwells in every heart, and is visible to every eye, and yet is intimately connected with the medical profession, the ordinary, the ethical, the individually personal, this, this alone is my subject. That I have thrown it into the form of letters was for this reason, that I wished, through the medium of certain individuals distinguished, at least, if not universally known, as masters in their particular department, to give prominence to those peculiar characteristics which were exhibited in their practice, their lot in life, or their self-confessions. These persons are no longer living, most of them, indeed, belong to times long since gone by,—a circumstance which afforded me all the freer scope for selection, and if the reader does not object to the design of these letters, he will, no doubt, readily excuse the fiction by which I have allowed myself to propound questions and difficulties mooted amongst the living, and to decide upon them through the medium of the departed.”

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF STIEGLITZ.*

Johann or John Stieglitz was born at Arolsen, on the 10th of March, 1767. He acquired the rudiments of education at the School of Gotha, and the principles of philosophy during a prolonged residence at Berlin; but Gottingen, where he graduated on the 25th of April, 1789, had the honour of furnishing him with his medical education. His Inaugural Dissertation treated '*De lue venerea larvata.*'

He commenced practice in Hanover, and became in the course of time the most popular, celebrated, and highly venerated physician in that state. He died there on the 31st of October, 1840, of a stroke of apoplexy, being at that time physician to the court, the principal medical authority, and implicitly trusted by every rank of society.

His literary pretensions were of two kinds: he was both a critic and an original writer. By reason of his remarkable penetration and the firm grasp which he took of truths really important, he was enabled at once to discover both the weak and strong points of every argument, and to exhibit them in a masterly manner. He manifested this talent in an eminent degree in one of a series of Reviews of the writings in reference to the Brunonian doctrines in the

* The Editor is indebted for the original of this sketch of the Life of Stieglitz to the kindness of Professor Marx.

‘Jena General Literary Times,’ and in the ‘Gottingen Scientific Advertiser.’ Impressed with the importance of his profession, he was not satisfied with exhibiting in his personal and academic capacity the perfect model of a practitioner, but he gave utterance to his views on medical subjects and duties in the following publications :

‘Ueber das Zusammenseyn der Aerzte an Krankenbette und ihre Verhältnisse unter sich.’ Hanover, 1798.

‘On the Consultation of Physicians at the bedside, and their deportment towards each other.’

‘Schilderung aus dem Leben eines Arztes.’ In Hufeland’s Journal, B. 28, 1809, 81-48.

‘Some passages in the Life of a Physician.’

‘Ueber die Stellung der Aerzte, zum Staate zum Publicum und unter sich.’ Hufeland, B. 60, 1828. Jan. 17, 1826.

‘On the position of Medical Men in the State, as regards the public, and amongst themselves.’

He honoured and prized the results of past experience, whilst he was ever open to the reception of new light, and embraced indeed every opportunity of acquiring it, but testing at the same time every novelty by his powerful judgment. When he found himself compelled to entertain mistrust, his doubts were openly expressed, and based upon satisfactory reasons, as may be seen by his works, one on ‘Animal Magnetism,’ Hanover, 1814, and another on ‘Homœopathy,’ Hanover, 1835.

Although he himself excelled in a special branch of knowledge, yet he placed the greatest weight on the general principles and opinions which obtained their confirmation from philosophy, physiology, and general patho-

logy. This order of mind he has prominently exhibited in his (unhappily) unfinished posthumous work, entitled

‘Pathologische Untersuchungen.’ 2 Theile, Hanover, 1832.

‘Pathological Researches.’

His eminent practical talents were manifested in an assemblage of excellencies and virtues, and those who had not the privilege of his acquaintance during his season of happy activity, may yet contemplate him as an incomparable physician in his work

‘Versuch einer Prüfung und Verbesserung Behandlungsart der Scharlach Fiebers.’ Hanover, 1807.

‘An attempt at the examination and improvement of the treatment in Scarlet Fever.’

In diagnostics he was especially admirable. Up to the latest period of his life he continued to be the last resource of the sick and of his colleagues, in obscure and hopeless cases. In a literary point of view we may cite his

‘Medicinische Räthsal.’ Hufeland’s Journal, B. 1, 1796, S. 534.

‘Medical Problems.’

‘Unfähigkeit von Dauer in Stehen ohne Lähmung.’ Ebend. B. 3. 1797, S. 115.

‘Impossibility of standing continually without producing lameness.’

‘Ueber die Schutzkraft der Kuhpocker.’ For the New Hanoverian Magazine, 1808.

‘On the preventive value of Vaccination.’

‘Ueber Blattern nach Kuhpocker.’ Fur Horn’s Archiv fur Med. Erfahrung, B. 11, 1809, H. 2, S. 187, 238.

‘On Variola after Vaccination.’ In Horn’s Archives of Medical Experience.

LETTER TO STIEGLITZ.

“Since the 31st of October, 1840, when you bade farewell to these earthly scenes, not merely my writing paper, but every day of my life has worn a mourning edge.

“When I received the unexpected intelligence of your departure, I felt that the death of a friend makes a rent in the heart, and the fall of a great man a chasm in nature.

“Three years have since then elapsed under impressions of various kinds, but my mind is as much unhinged as if I had lost you but yesterday, or rather, the importance of the loss is become to me more than ever apparent.

“In order to immortalize the lengthened period I lived with you in the interchange of thought and feeling, and to celebrate an enduring resurrection of your love, I once began to raise a monument of remembrance to you; but precious as was the material, the chisel which should have shaped the costly marble, refused to obey the trembling hand.

“And besides the world needed not the portrait I would have drawn, since to your contemporaries you were yourself a model, and to posterity there remain your works. But to myself you only appear as a beloved father and teacher, whose hands were spread out to bless. Why do I now more earnestly than ever invoke your name? Because I would speak of Physicians who have consecrated their thoughts as well as their energies entirely to the cause of humanity. Let not, therefore, your modesty be offended if I first make grateful mention of you.

“You possessed two characteristics which I believe are seldom found combined in a physician—genius and experience; and hence you ought to have been an eminent prognosticator, since Euripides, in his ‘*Helena*,’ speaks of this union as the surest index of the true prophet. And as our own

fatherland's poet says of Columbus, that genius is so intimately allied to nature, that the land which he discovered, had it not existed, would have risen for him from the waves, so, had you not found theoretical medicine ready to your hand, you would have created it.

"Still of these subjects it is not my purpose to speak ; I would only point out how your widely-extended agency operated in the moral world.

"Your characteristic love of truth rendered you scientific in criticism, manly in sentiment and action. With your abhorrence of all speciousness and of every kind of falsehood, was combined your courage to call, when needed, things by their right names, and, without regard to consequences, or to the agreement of others, boldly to declare your internal convictions.

"As you ever discerned for yourself in the search after truth the most direct road between plan and execution, so you practised towards others the difficult, yet nevertheless indispensable, duty of saying '*No*.'

"In your work on the '*Consultation of Physicians at the Bedside*,' you have shown, with as much acuteness as benevolence, that the advice given is only serviceable to the patient in the proportion that the colleagues agree in fundamental principles, exercise friendly dispositions towards each other, and are actuated by disinterested motives. The picture of Chodowiecki, the frontispiece of Fritz's '*Annals of Medicine*,' where the patient is peeping out of his bed and casting suspicious glances on three disciples of *Æsculapius* zealously engaged in consultation, was probably drawn from life, and certainly he appears to have been acquainted with Hadrian's famous epitaph, '*Turba medicorum perdidit Caesarem*.'

"In proportion as, with indefatigable industry, you strove to form an independent opinion upon every phenomenon, and to support it with convincing proofs, in the

same degree were you inclined to enter into the opinions of others. Your indulgent examination of them, and your apologies for deficiencies, must awake, if not emulation, at least admiration.

“As there exists no code of law for the physician, you could allow for mistakes, but not easily for criminal actions.

“Your own conviction, that the Divine law consists but of few commands, you did not obtrude upon others. You wished that medical practice should be regarded as of a moral nature, and valued more according to the intention than the consequences.

“Since you laid it down as a principle not to swerve from the highest maxims of art or of life, so in advancing years you withdrew as much as possible from practice, a fact which by some was not understood, and by others misrepresented.

“You were willing to leave to younger members of the profession a freer stage for the development of their energies, and to devote more uninterrupted leisure to literary labours. With what precision you scanned and criticised the works of others I have often had occasion thankfully to acknowledge.

“From aspiring youth you joyfully and readily welcomed fresh suggestions; you imparted to them wise counsels, and pointed out to them the end which yet lay before them to attain. Every word from you fell on the ear like a lesson; every lesson seemed like a delightful recreation. Imperishable, fructifying, they sank into the soul.

“Science, and the land which you served, will hold your memory in honour, in me will it endure to my latest breath.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO STIEGLITZ.

In pursuance of the design announced in his preface, of making his ideal correspondents the means of developing his sentiments on the ethical relations of medicine, our author sets out with presenting to us the character of Stieglitz, selected, it would seem, for this prominent situation in his picture, as exhibiting the finished portrait of an *accomplished* physician.

In the glance which he permits us at the features of this tried and valued friend, whose death "has left a chasm in existence," we perceive,

1st. The elevated views which he entertained of the medical profession. *He wished medical practice to be regarded as of a moral nature*—a most important and weighty sentiment which well deserves consideration. Our foreign brethren have powerfully enforced this view. "None but a really moral man," says Hufeland, in the opening of his 'Practice of Medicine,' "can be a physician in the true sense of the word, and it is such a one only that can find satisfaction in his vocation, for he alone is conscious of a higher end of existence which exalts him above earthly considerations, and the joys and troubles of life."

"If," says another able and eloquent writer, Dr. Maximilian Simon, in his 'Déontologie Médicale,' "if we could recognise degrees in the empire, by which the moral law imposes its prescriptions on the conscience of man, medicine doubtless would be distinguished amongst the liberal professions as that in which personal self-renunciation, and devotion to the general interest are most imperiously demanded. It is especially in the practice of such a science that a man is called upon to lay aside all personal preoccupation, and to regulate his conduct by principles of the most elevated character. All the interests which

pertain to life, moral interests, material interests, all his fortune, are committed by the sick man to him to whom he has intrusted the re-establishment of his health. And can the medical man, who sees himself charged with a mission of so serious a character, conceive himself at liberty to mingle selfish considerations with interests of an order so elevated?"

Would that our young men who are about to enter on the career of medical life would lay to heart such sentiments as these; that they would see the necessity of having their conduct based on principles of a higher character than that mere conventional morality which just aims to pass through life with tolerable ease and reputation! that they would look around on the Whole, look forward to the Future, and upward to the law of Him who created the healing art, and gives to man the ability to pursue it!

Dr. Simon has well indicated the source from which these principles must emanate, when he says, "the men who have left the most glorious names in the history of our profession,—Bayle, Van Helmont, Stahl, Sydenham, Boerhaave, Hoffmann, Van Sweiten, Nieuwenty, Tralles, Hecquet, Tissot, Zimmermann, Sténon, Winslow, Bordeu, Morgagni, Barthés, Pinel, Portal, Dupuytren, Richerand, Esquirol, &c., have been thoroughly aware that it is in the Christian religion that the medical man must seek for the light and the strength which he needs to rise to the level of his profession."

To the names thus distinguished by Simon we would add those of Mason Good, of Burder, of Hope, and of Abercrombie, men whose professional eminence was as it were the echo of their obedience to the divine command—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them;" and who looked on the life and welfare of every fellow-creature within their sphere as a sacred deposit from their Divine Master.

2d. Stieglitz is invoked, because the subject is to be of those who have consecrated their energies to the cause of pure humanity. We may well infer then, even did his life throw no light on the subject, that he was an example of disinterested and active benevolence.

“Woe to the physician,” says Simon, “who does not love his fellow-creatures, for the understanding dies of atrophy when it wants the impulse of the heart, and society will find in him but an imperfect tool of his art.” “What more divine,” says the noble and benevolent Lettsom, “than to soothe the afflicted, and to soften agony! what more sublime than to restore to life the victim of disease! I envy not the prince on the throne, nor the sultan in his harem, whilst I enjoy the confidence of the sick chamber and the blessing of the restored. I love my profession perhaps too much. It loves me, and I have no objection to die in the chamber of malady, provided I can mitigate it to a fellow-creature.” *

When we have obtained a man of feeling and benevolent disposition, who has exalted views of his profession, and who has drawn those views from the source of all truth, we have laid a deep and firm basis on which to raise the superstructure of professional ability, and we must now cast another “glance” at Stieglitz, and discover what were his intellectual qualifications. These were, it seems, great penetration and a firm grasp of truth, candour and openness in receiving new opinions, caution in judging of them, and that rare union of genius and experience which almost seems to endow its possessor with the gift of prophecy.

“Besides the qualifications of a proper education,” says Gregory, in his ‘Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician,’ “there is required the concurrence of a penetrating genius and a clear solid judgment; and, in

* Life of Lettsom, vol. iii, p. 341.

many cases, of a quickness of apprehension instantaneously to perceive where the greatest probability of success lies, and the resolution to act accordingly." These characteristics, though to a great extent natural gifts, are of course susceptible of much cultivation and improvement in the mind of the really conscientious and industrious practitioner. That love of truth also, which, whilst it inclined Stieglitz candidly and dispassionately to examine the merits of new opinions, or new plans of treatment, yet prevented his eagerly and rashly embracing every novelty, is a state of mind which all should aim to possess. The medical man, as he advances in life, is perhaps too much inclined to trust to those remedies and that plan of treatment which he has found successful, and to neglect or despise what is novel. Probably some of this feeling is due to the crude and superficial character of much of our modern medical literature, the product of young and inexperienced men, more anxious to see their names in print, and to obtain an evanescent notoriety as the propounders of new doctrines, than to make solid though humbler additions to medical science. Frequent disappointments of this kind produce on the mind of the experienced man a disinclination to admit novelties, or even to disarrange the accustomed tenor of his thoughts by taking them into consideration. Still, if there is danger in the too hasty admission of novelties, there is a danger no less real in the prejudiced rejection of them. What should we have lost if the invaluable discovery of the stethoscope, tardily received in this country whilst in general use in France, had been altogether rejected by us? It is in view of these opposite dangers, this Scylla and Charybdis of medicine, that we learn to value the services of such a man as Stieglitz, considered as a medical critic. Dr. Simon, after demonstrating admirably the importance and usefulness of medical criticism, thus points out what ought to be its character :

“Whether, then, criticism call to its aid a wise and prudent clinical experimentation, or whether, to accomplish its work, it content itself with the sound traditions of science and those general principles which form the basis of medical knowledge, it ought ever to show itself independent, strict, impartial. Let it never forget that a hostile passion, a weak compliance, may compromise human life by turning practice into a false direction, and that new doctrinal assertions which end in the institution of an active course of medicine, are suspicious till they have been verified by conscientious experience. Let it guard practitioners against new remedies empirically introduced into science, when these new remedies may be the occasion of accidents more serious than the disease they are brought in to antagonise. Let it stigmatise sophisms without mercy, should self-love not fear to call them in to the help of error, never forgetting that profoundly true maxim of Seneca, “*Res falsa et inanis nisi corrigatur, habet non nunquam fidem; multi sunt homines iudicii parum firmi qui nihil audiant legantur quod non credant nisi refutatum sciant.*”

Stieglitz also possessed great practical talents and a deep knowledge of his profession; he exhibited, as has been already said, a happy combination of genius and experience, such as was apparent in the late Dr. Baillie, and which in the case of both was the foundation, no doubt, of their wonderful acuteness in diagnosis. He was, it appears, thoroughly versed in the science of medicine, the only sure foundation on which a medical reputation can be built. A happy concurrence of circumstances may raise a man destitute of solid attainments to an elevation above his merits, but his position is always insecure, and if we look for him after a few years, we shall probably see him sunk into insignificance.

But Stieglitz was not content with serving his generation in his own person; he was a Father in his profession, and

endeavoured to diffuse through the minds of his younger brethren his own thirst for knowledge, to animate and direct their efforts, and to correct their mistakes. Few things are more delightful than to see a man who has attained a high position himself exhibit a kind and generous solicitude to aid the struggling ascent of others, not by a weak and injudicious patronage of the incompetent, but by a liberal, discriminating, and disinterested encouragement of real talent and merit. Such has ever been the characteristic of a truly great man. Such was the conduct of Dr. Baillie, who took delight in narrating to young men the history of his own life, and pointing out to them such qualifications as his experience led him to consider essential to success.

One other feature in the character of Stieglitz, and we will conclude these remarks: and this was his deportment in consultation: he seems to have exemplified the sentiments of Hufeland. "The great principle to be observed by every consulting physician must always remain this, to have nothing in view but the welfare of the patient, and to that end he must entirely sacrifice his personal feeling, in order that all his powers may unite for a common purpose." "A physician," says Dr. John Gregory, "who has any sense of justice and humanity, will never involve his patient in the consequences of private quarrels, in which he has no concern. Physicians in consultation, whatever may be their private resentments or opinions of one another, should divest themselves of all partialities, and think of nothing but what will most effectually contribute to the relief of those under their care. If a physician cannot lay his hand on his heart, and say that his mind is open to conviction, from whatever quarter it shall come, he should in honour decline the consultation. Many advantages arise from two consulting together, who are men of candour, and have mutual confidence in each other's honour. A remedy may occur to one which did not to another, and a physician may

want resolution, or sufficient confidence in his own opinion, to prescribe a powerful but precarious remedy, on which, however, the life of his patient may depend ; in this case, the concurring opinion of his brother may fix his own. But if there is no mutual confidence, if opinions are regarded, not according to their intrinsic merit, but according to the person from whom they proceed, or if there is reason to believe that sentiments delivered with openness are to be whispered abroad and misrepresented to the public, without regard to the obligations of honour and secrecy, and if, in consequence of this, a physician is singly to be made responsible for the effects of his advice, in such cases, consultations of physicians tend rather to the detriment than advantage of the sick, and the usual, indeed most favorable, conclusion is some very harmless but insignificant prescription." But there are duties in consultation, not only in reference to the patient, but in reference to medical men amongst themselves. What greater cruelty or meanness is there than for an elder practitioner to treat his younger brother with slight and superciliousness, and, instead of encouraging him in his arduous duties, withholding from him his just meed of praise, and bearing himself towards him in a manner calculated to lower him in his patient's eyes, and lessen his confidence in him for the future ! We must again cite Dr. Baillie as a noble instance of a contrary line of conduct. "To him," says his biographer, "the practitioner might safely confide his reputation ; to his judgment the patient might implicitly confide his life. There is one great principle in Medical Ethics from which he never deviated, that of doing as much good as possible to the patient with as little injury as possible to those previously in attendance. He was not the man who, by word, look, or action, would cast the slightest shadow of reflection on the conduct or opinion of the general practitioner or the ordinary physician in attendance. If he differed in opinion, or disap-

proved of the measures of others, that disapprobation never appeared beyond the precincts of the consulting room. He knew too well the uncertainty of medical evidence, and the proneness of the human mind to error, not to view with tenderness the failings or even the indiscretions of others. In aiding the former, in reproving the latter, he alarmed not the patient, he offended not the practitioner. That such conduct was founded on the wisest worldly policy in the end, as well as on the noblest moral principle in the beginning, will be acknowledged by most men who have narrowly watched the career of physicians. That reputation alone can be solid or lasting which is based on the adjudication of the only legitimate tribunal—the voice of the profession; and he who hopes to raise it on any other foundation, or imitates the example of those who use unworthy means to attain popular fame or worldly pelf, will find himself wofully deceived in the end.”*

Another important duty in consultation is attention to punctuality, that the time of one medical man may not be wasted by waiting for another. Dr. Baillie used to say, “I consider it not only a professional but a moral duty to meet punctually my professional brethren of all ranks; my equals have a right to such a mark of my respect, and I should shudder at the apprehension of lessening a junior practitioner in the eyes of his patient, by not keeping an appointment with him.” We may also add, that there should be no discussion of the case in the presence of the patient or his friends by one medical man apart from the other; nor, as Percival says, should any prognostications be delivered which are not the result of common deliberation and concurrence.

We have thus exhibited to our view in the character of

* *Medico-Chirurg. Review*, p. 733, 1823.

Stieglitz our author's conception of the character of an accomplished physician, including high moral principle, disinterested benevolence, a penetrating and powerful mind, love of truth, sound medical knowledge, thorough practical experience, combined with delicacy to the feelings of his brethren and generous encouragement of the younger members of the profession.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF PETRUS DE APONO.

Petrus de Apono was born at Apono, now called Abano, a village in the territory of Padua, in 1246. After having taken his degree at Paris as Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine, he went to practise the latter science at Bologna. It is said that he would never visit a sick person beyond the limits of the city without receiving fifty crowns. The Pope Honorius IV sent for him, he would not set out till he had been promised 400 ducats daily. The avarice of Apono was so odious, that he was accused of having the power, by magical art, of drawing back into his pocket the money which he had spent. He was accused also of having acquired the knowledge of the seven liberal arts, by means of seven familiar spirits, who held their academy in one of the doctor's bottles. These ridiculous imputations occasioned his being denounced to the Inquisition, and he would, doubtless, have been committed to the flames, had not death come to his deliverance in the interval. He died in 1312,* and was publicly buried in the church of St. Anthony. But the inquisitors, having pronounced sentence of condemnation on him, ordered the corpse to be burned; it was taken up secretly, and concealed in the church of St. Peter. The inquisitors, furious, laid hold of a portrait of Apono, and had it burned in the public market by the executioner. At length the poor corpse found repose at the entrance of the church of St. Augustus, where Peter de Lignamine placed a simple Latin epitaph in 1660. Frederic duke of Urbino, amongst the

* Professor Marx gives 1316 as the date of his death.

statues of celebrated men, erected one to this physician. The Senate of Padua placed also one of him over the gate of their palace, amongst those of Titus Livius, of Albert, and of Julius Paulus. It should be remarked as a constitutional peculiarity in Peter de Apono, that he had such an excessive abhorrence of milk and cheese, that he could not even see them without fainting away. He has left several works on the sciences which he cultivated. The best known is his ‘*Conciliator differentiarum Philosophorum et præcipue Medicorum*,’ printed at Mantua, 1472, and at Venice, 1476, in folio,—scarce, and reprinted several times. In this book he strives to reconcile (which is no easy matter) the different opinions of philosophers. He also wrote ‘*Geomantia*,’ printed 1556; ‘*Physionomia*,’ Padua, 1474; ‘*Expositio problematum Aristotelis*,’ 1482; ‘*Heptameron*,’ Parisiis, 1567; a little work on Magic; ‘*Libellus de Venenis*,’ Venice, 1550, very scarce. This last work has been translated into French.*

LETTER TO PETRUS DE APONO.

“Most famous Peter, permit me familiarly to *thou thee*, since thou didst make use of the Latin tongue and art therefore accustomed to such a style of address.

“Already in my work on Toxicology I had named thee as a great physician and a bold thinker, without knowing more of thee at that time than thine own work, and the spurious works shamefully introduced under thy name. Since I have been acquainted with the unjust and imperfect biographical notices of thee, my esteem for thee is changed into an intimate union of heart.

“Love concealed thy corpse that Superstition might not deliver it to the flames; thy effigy was burned by the

* Translated from the Dictionnaire Universelle.

Inquisition,* but the flames became a brilliant halo of glory to thy fame ; thy death, in the year 1316, was an era in history, for it was the extinction of an independent spirit amidst the darkness of slavish superstition.

“They held thee for a wizard and a magician,† and truly may thy nature have been fascinating, thy knowledge magical ; they said of thee that thou hadst had intercourse with spirits,‡ and that thou heldest seven of them enchanted in a bottle ; and truly many thoughts, like ministering spirits, are inclosed in the crystal of a good conscience.§ Also thou art said to have possessed the art to bring back the money which thou hadst spent into thy purse ; if, truly, such a home sickness did manifest itself in thy coin, it could hardly have been deemed, in the opinion of that age more than in the present, an evil which demanded cure, however much it might awaken envy and mortification.

“But at all events, dear Peter, thou mightst consider thyself fortunate, since the physician Daniel Gadden, if he has really reached the kingdom of heaven, could recount

* It is stated in ‘Comneni Papadopoli Historia Gymnasii Pativini,’ T. i, Venet. 1726, fol. p. 278 : “Vivo factum non semel negotium est a Quaesitoribus sacris Inquisitores in eum damnatum invecti, comburendum ejus cadaver sanxere. Hoc per contubernalem foeminam inde, ubi jacebat, erepto, et apud aedes S. Petri occultato, saevitum est in ejus effigiem, quam ut haeretici, reique objectorum criminum manifesti publicus in foro ignis absumpsit.”

† a. a. “O. Creditus fascinare homines, adhibere magicas artes.”

‡ Facciolati (*Fasti Gymnasii Patavini* ; Patavii 1757, 4 p. xlv), remarks : “Medicinam fecit peritia et felicitate tanta, praesertim Aponensium thermarum auxilio, ut visus sit ipsas quoque naturae vires medendo superare et cum spiritibus commercia jungere.”

§ “Il s'estoit acquis la connoissance des 7 arts libéraux par le moyen des 7 esprits familiers, qu'il tenoit enfermé dans un cristal. Il avoit l'industrie de faire revenir en sa bourse l'argent qu'il avoit despencé.” (Naudé, *Apologie des Grands Hommes*, chap. xiv.)

to thee something much worse which befell him in a tumult two centuries later; namely, that he, for having made a collection of various natural objects, was treated as a sorcerer, tortured, and torn to pieces.*

“It is a stationary world thou wilt reply, and truly this cannot be gainsaid.

“There are men who, spite of their natural energy, remain as inactive in their day as volcanoes at the south pole, which are surrounded with glaciers. Yea, history shows, that natures in which ideas and feelings rush full and mighty as the fountain of the Geisers or the cataract of Niagara, are avoided by their contemporaries as if possessed with demons, and their dwellings shunned as the abode of the evil one, till at last some bold inquirer ventures to approach nearer, and bring to light the rich but hidden treasure.

“We often speak of superstition, and the love of the marvellous, but not of the direction in which weak minds become important, and the noblest spirits appear dangerous.

“This subject thou couldst handle with peculiar effect from thy own experience; and since thou hadst opportunity to institute observations on one of the *Thermæ*, so wouldst thou be able, admirably, to treat of the *Spa* absurdities.

“Superstition, indeed, is so firmly imbedded in human nature, that a phrenologist certainly might discover an organ for it. As the yellow speck in the eye receives no image, so this spot in the brain can discern no truth.

* In the narrative of the melancholy tragedy in the city of Moscow, in 1682, in the ‘*Theatro Europæo*,’ Frankfurt, 1691, fol. V. 12, p. 446, it is said, “The Empress begged for his life, but the Imperial Guards said he was a wizard; they had found dried sea-crabs, with round bodies and feet, also dried snakes, wherewith he worked enchantments, and on that account he must die. After they had tortured him, they tore him to pieces in such a manner that his entrails lay strewed about the streets.”

"A belief in the marvellous is the more excusable, considering how little the intellect even of the wisest can grasp. The appearance of some great benefactor to mankind in an unfeeling age, the raising up of Napoleon in an abandoned age, are wonders as great as the fact that the willow-worm has more than 4061 muscles,* and the crab a propensity to somnambulism.†

"Physicians truly ought to favour the simplest modes of explanation, and to interpret appearances by physical laws, that they may thereby unmask the impostor and defend the innocent.

"Hast thou, indeed, learned that it was the physician Edward Jordan who, in the sixteenth century, exposed the notorious Anna Gunter, and showed that she exhibited her extraordinary paroxysms merely to bring the suspicion of witchcraft on a neighbour whom she hated.‡

"Was not that an admirable declaration of Theodore Mayerne (who died in 1655, aged 82, having been the physician of four kings), when he averred that demoniac possession was only to be credited in the case of an uneducated man being able to express himself with propriety on scientific subjects, and to sustain his body for some time floating in the atmosphere?§

"What poor thanks, at times, physicians earn by their

* Whoever doubts this may have ocular demonstration in Lyonnet's 'Anatomical Treatise' (*Traité Anatomique de la Chenille*.) Blumenbach remarks in his 'Comparative Anatomy,' 2d edit. p. 439, that it has ten times as many as there are in the human body, and nearly as many again as there are parts in a stocking-frame.

† Henneman shows in his estimable treatise, 'The Crab a Somnambulist,' in Hufeland's Journal, 1823, Art. 5, p. 19, that the walk of the crab through the simple application of the stroking of the hand, or through breathing on the back, slackens, and at last movement entirely ceases.

‡ J. Aikin's Biographical Memoirs. Lond. 1780, p. 232.

§ Ibid. p. 263.

labours was experienced in Padua. The pillar of opprobrium erected at Milan in 1630, to a surgeon absurdly suspected by the mob of having caused the spread of the plague, was only destroyed in the year 1778.*

“The obsolete opinion amongst the common people that, in the progress of great pestilential diseases, physicians serve to sow the seeds instead of eradicating them, revives indeed, now and then, but is gradually dying out. At the first breaking-out of the cholera, it reached its former measure of barbarity, but only in a few places, just to remind us of the old hereditary evil of unreasonableness; but the present age can no more tolerate such outrageous absurdity.

“One would willingly endure life again to witness light overcoming darkness, and ignorance and barbarity banished by advancing civilization.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO PETRUS DE APONO.

The history of mankind has furnished from time to time instances of men who have been in advance of their age and country. Sometimes this advance has not been so great, but that they have been able to bring up their contemporaries to their own elevation, sufficiently at least to fit them to become executors of their purposes, recipients of their opinions. Such was the case with the Czar Peter, with Cromwell, with Napoleon, with Luther, also with Newton and Bacon. At other times the distance has been so great that the gifted genius has stood alone in the world, and has shared the fate which Pope describes,—

“ Truths would you teach, and save a sinking land,
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.”

Essay on Man, Epist. iv.

* There is a well-written popular account of this in Manzoni's ‘*Colonna Infame*.’

His name is maligned, his person perhaps persecuted, and his opinions buried amidst scorn and contumely, to revive only in another generation. So was it with Galileo, with Savonarola, and with Petrus de Apono.

The superstition under which these great men succumbed has indeed vanished before the influence of advancing civilization ; but civilization itself has given rise to other unjust misapprehensions respecting the medical profession. It is no longer indeed suspected of dabbling in infernal magic, nor (except amongst the half-barbarous people of Russia) of actually originating diseases, but it has had its full share in the sneers of the unthinking and prejudiced. "Scepticism on medical subjects," says Dr. Simon, "has become a sort of literary tradition ; there is no author so insignificant who has not tried his strength against our gloomy conjectures. Has the result, however, developed a single serious argument against the science? Petrarch accuses the physicians of his time of having destroyed the baths of the Lake Avernus, because they cured too many ; this is but the story of Esculapius destroyed by Jupiter, because he thinned the subjects of Pluto to an inconvenient degree. 'How can we refrain from laughing at them and their art,' said Montaigne, 'when they gravely advise you to take blood drawn from the left side of the comb of a hunted black cock?' But did such a prescription ever find a place in serious science? In the same manner, it is not really against the *science of medicine* that the passionate invectives of Rousseau or the pasquinades of Molière, often unworthy of his genius, are aimed. Rousseau accused medicine as unavailing, because he had passions which constantly nourished the secret sufferings under which he languished ; in the same manner that he made society responsible for the hallucinations of a morbid mind. 'I have a physician,' said Molière one day to Louis XIV ; 'he gives me remedies, I do not take them, yet I get better.'

Unhappily this method did not always succeed, and the advice which he received to restrict himself to a strict regimen, and to leave Bejart, was well worth the morsel of Parmesan cheese which his old Laforest gave him the day of his death.”* Simon adds, that all the memoirs of private persons, those of Dangeau, St. Simon, De Retz, the Letters of Madame de Sévigné, abound with the most cruel accusations and the greatest contempt, as respects the art of medicine and its professors. Scarcely an eminent person is reported to have died whose death is not imputed to the ignorance and unskilfulness of his medical attendants. Similar instances might easily be adduced from our own popular literature. Dr. Johnson, it is well known, ridiculed the idea of feeling a man’s wrist to discover what was going on in his constitution. Napoleon always refused to take medicine, and had no confidence in any branch of the healing art except surgery; and other eminent men have fallen victims to their absurd scepticism and obstinacy. The common parlance of society will furnish every one with instances of a professed contempt for and disbelief of the principles of medicine.

Side by side with this scepticism we often see an enormous amount of credulity on medical subjects. It is worthy of remark, indeed, that the two points on which superstition has chiefly laid hold, are religion and medicine, perhaps because it is on these two points that men’s passions are the strongest and their knowledge the smallest. What people do not fully comprehend usually excites both hope and fear more than what they do, and where knowledge ceases imagination supplies the deficiency. Hence we may adduce the desirableness of a more general enlightenment of the mind on scientific subjects. It is in proportion to our advances in science and knowledge that juster

* *Déontologie Médicale*, liv. iii, ch. i.

views of the value of medicine have prevailed; but great improvements may yet be hoped for. Gregory was so impressed with the importance of an enlightenment of the public mind with regard to medical subjects, that he recommends laymen to study medicine as a branch of general knowledge. "If," says he, "a gentleman has a turn for observation, the natural history of his own species is surely a more interesting subject, and affords a larger scope for the display of genius, than any branch of natural history. If such men were to claim their right of inquiry into a subject which so nearly concerns them, the good effects in regard to medicine would soon appear." But this appears to us a questionable proposition. The study of medicine is too extensive, too serious, and requires too great a concentration of the time and thoughts, to be taken up in a superficial manner, and experience often shows us that the reading of popular treatises and getting the mind preoccupied with a set of notions on medical subjects, are productive of very hurtful effects to those patients who do not possess an uncommon share of good sense and discernment. If persons would but learn to act in medicine as they would on other subjects, and infer that in a science so complicated and difficult, he who has most studied it is most likely best to understand it, it would be a better safeguard against imposture than any smatterings of medical knowledge could prove.

The history of impostures and superstitions in medicine is indeed a curious chapter in history. Dr. Falconer, in writing to Dr. Lettsom, says, in reference to Mayersbach the water doctor, "What an imposture this to be practised in the 18th century, when we are all so eager to cast off all imposition both in arts, politics, and religion! It will remain as a monument of the folly of the nation in our history, and make persons discredit our accounts of the improvements made in this age."

Medical superstitions are by no means extinct in our own day. Metallic tractors, St. John Long, brandy and salt, have each in their turn waxed and waned; but we have still underworking systems which are to supersede all regular art. Of the two systems which are now bidding high for public favour, namely, Homœopathy and Hydro-pathy, Dr. Marshall Hall, in his 'Practical Observations and Suggestions,' recently published, does not scruple to say, "The former is indeed the art of amusing the patient while nature cures the disease; the latter possesses great power. It may be compared to gambling when the stakes are high." Of these systems, and of quackery in general, we shall have occasion to speak again, and shall now dismiss the subject, merely observing that until the love of the marvellous shall be a passion extinct in human nature, and until all mystery, jugglery, and affectation are rooted out of the profession itself, we cannot expect to see the last of these-absurd pretensions.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF DR. CHEYNE.

Dr. Cheyne was born in Scotland in 1671, and was originally intended for the church, but hearing Dr. Pitcairn lecture before the University of Edinburgh, he decided upon the study of medicine, in which he graduated. During the early part of his life, to use his own words, he “passed his youth in close study, and almost constant application to the abstract sciences, in which his great pleasure consisted, and consequently in great temperance and a sedentary life. At the age of thirty,” he thus continues, “upon my coming to London, I all on a sudden changed my whole manner of living. I found the bottle companions, the younger gentry, and the free livers to be the most easy of access, the more quickly susceptible of friendship and acquaintance, nothing being necessary for that purpose but to be able to eat heartily, and swallow down much liquor; and being naturally of a large size, a cheerful temper, and tolerable lively imagination, and having in my country retirement laid in stores of ideas and facts, by these qualifications I soon became caressed by them, and grew daily in bulk and in friendship. My health was in a few years brought into great distress by so sudden and violent a change. I was excessively fat, short-breathed, lethargic, and listless.”

After mentioning a severe attack of intermittent fever from which he suffered, he goes on to describe the malady

which quite disabled him from continuing his former habits. He says, "I was suddenly seized with a vertiginous paroxysm, so extremely frightful and terrible as to approach nearly to a fit of apoplexy, but by degrees it turned to a constant violent headache, giddiness, anxiety, lowness, and terror, so that I went about like a malefactor condemned, or one who expected every moment to be crushed by a ponderous instrument of death hanging over his head. On this occasion all my bouncing, protesting, undertaking companions forsook me, they could not bear, it seems, to see their companion in such misery and distress, but retired to comfort themselves with a cheer-upping cup." After speaking of his plan of treating himself, he goes on to say, "whilst I was thus, as I have said, forsaken by my holiday friends, and my body was as it were melting away like a snowball in summer, being dejected, melancholy, and much confined at home by my course of mineral medicines, and courting retirement, I had a long season for meditation and reflection, (my faculties being then as quick and clear as ever), which I was the more readily led into, that I concluded myself infallibly entering into an unknown state of things. Having had a liberal and regular education, with the instruction and example of pious parents, who had first designed me for the church, I had preserved a firm persuasion of the great and fundamental principles of all virtue and morality, viz. the existence of a supreme and infinitely perfect Being, the freedom of the will, the immortality of the spirits of all intelligent beings, and the certainty of future rewards and punishments."

It would not befit this slight sketch of Dr. Cheyne's biography to pursue farther the deeply interesting account he gives of the state of his mind, except so far as is needful in order to illustrate the points on which Professor Marx chiefly comments in his letter. Dr. Cheyne adds, "the fright, anxiety, dread, and terror which, in minds of such a

turn as mine, especially under a broken and cachectic constitution, and in so atrocious a nervous state, arise, or are at least exasperated, from such reflections; being once settled and quieted, often become an excellent cordial and a constant source of peace, tranquillity, and cheerfulness, and so greatly contributes to forward the cure of such nervous diseases; for I never found any sensible tranquillity or amendment till I came to this settled resolution in the main, viz. TO NEGLECT NOTHING TO SECURE MY ETERNAL PEACE, MORE THAN IF I HAD BEEN CERTIFIED I SHOULD DIE WITHIN THE DAY, NOR TO MIND ANYTHING THAT MY SECULAR OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES DEMANDED OF ME, LESS THAN IF I HAD BEEN INSURED TO LIVE FIFTY YEARS MORE. This, though with infinite weakness and imperfection, has been much my settled resolution ever since."

Being still very ill, Dr. Cheyne went to Bath, and commenced living upon a diet of milk and vegetables, after continuing which five or six months, he found himself gradually recovering.

"By this time," he says, "I had been extremely reduced in flesh, and was become lank, fleet, and ninble." He then gradually returned to a meat diet with wine, but more moderately than before; for he says, "For nearly twenty years I continued sober, moderate, and plain in my diet, and in my greatest health drank not above a quart, or three pints at most, of wine every day (which I then absurdly thought necessary to my bulk and stowage, though certainly by far an overdose), and that at dinner; never tasting any supper, and at breakfast, nothing but green tea, without any eatable; but by this means every dinner necessarily became a surfeit and debauch, and in ten or twelve years I swelled to such an enormous size, that upon my last weighing I exceeded 32 stone. My breath became so short, that upon stepping into my chariot quickly, and with some effort, I was ready to faint away for want of breath, and my face turned black."

After painful and prolonged sufferings he again had recourse to a vegetable diet, more rigorous than ever, and with like happy results, for he says, "I thank God I have gone on one constant tenour of diet, and enjoy as good health as at my time of life (being now sixty) I or any man can reasonably expect ; my regimen at present is milk, with tea, coffee, bread and butter, mild cheese, salad, fruits and seeds of all kinds, with tender roots (as potatoes, turnips, carrots), in short, everything that has not life—dressed or not as I like it. From the most extreme misery, I do now enjoy as perfect health, as much activity and cheerfulness, with the full, free, and perfect use of my faculties, a facility of going about my studies and the duties of my profession, and, in short, of every rational function of life as I was ever capable in my best days, and indeed of everything worth living for as a free and rational intelligence. And therefore, with God's grace, if my health, senses, and love of virtue continue with me the same, I shall, I hope, go on in the method now described, and live and I hope die in continual gratitude to the best of Beings, who, by an overruling Providence, and as it were by casual hints as far beyond the reach of my penetration, has irresistibly, as I should almost say if I felt not my own liberty, directed the great steps of my life and health hitherto.

' Misericordias Domini in æternum cantato. '

Dr. Cheyne continued to practise with much success in Bath, and died in 1743, aged 72.

LETTER TO GEORGE CHEYNE.

“During my stay in England I found the Quakers* so extremely cordial, that I have no hesitation in inquiring of you, who belonged to that respectable body, and were so zealous for dietetics,† who was the maker of the inclosed thermometer,‡ whether he lived before 1743 (the year of your death), or later, and you first became acquainted with him there ‘where seasons no longer change?’ This is a point I am very curious to ascertain; since I am resolving in my mind the writing of a treatise on this useful instrument, and as this kind of subject requires to be treated with profoundness, you will, therefore, make allowances for my importunity.§

“Your country, indeed, possesses Father Mathew, who, through the power of his eloquence, and also, as it would seem, through the distribution of medals, has been able to effect so much that he, as I imagine, scarcely needs any other instrument than his own honest intention; in other places perhaps the same good end may be attained in a like manner.

“A visible proof operates most effectually on the mass, and who ought to know this better than you, who made more use of the common-place apophthegms, of the schola Saler-

* I can find no account of Dr. Cheyne’s becoming a Quaker, and as he was originally intended for the church, he certainly was not an hereditary member of the Society of Friends.—*Translator*.

† Dr. Cheyne’s Account of himself and of his writings.

‡ This scale of health is in ‘Public Characters,’ London, 1801, p. 499, where it is supposed to have originated with Rush.

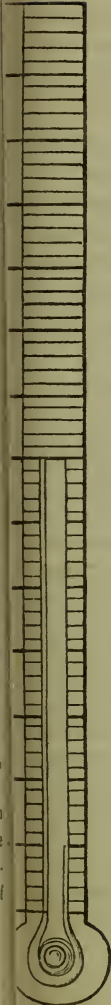
§ In Pettigrew’s life of Lettson this thermometer is given, with the following remark:—“From Dr. Rush Dr. Lettson obtained the idea which induced him to construct the following curious and ingenious moral and physical thermometer, or scale of the progress of temperance and intemperance.”—*Translator*.

A MORAL AND PHYSICAL THERMOMETER;

OR,

A SCALE OF THE PROGRESS OF TEMPERANCE AND INTEMPERANCE.

TEMPERANCE.



Water	{	Health, Wealth
Milk and Water		Serenity of Mind
Small Beer		Reputation, Long Life, and Happiness
Cider and Perry	{	Cheerfulness
Wine		Strength and
Porter		Nourishment, when taken only at meals, and in moderate quantities
Strong Beer		

INTEMPERANCE.

	VICES.	DISEASES.	PUNISHMENTS.
Punch	Idleness	Sickness, Puking, and	Debt
Toddy and Crank	Peevishness	Tremors of the Hands in the Morning	Black Eyes
Grog, Brandy and Water	Quarrelling	Bloatedness	Rags
Flip and Shrub	Fighting, Lying, Swearing, Obscenity	Red Nose and Face	Hunger
Bitters infused in Spirits	Swindling, Perjury	Sore and Swelled Legs	Hospital, Poor-House, Jail
Hysteric Water, Gin, Rum, Whiskey in the morning	Burglary	Jaundice, Dropsy, Melancholy, Madness, Palsy	Whipping, Botany Bay
Ditto during the Day and Night	Murder, Suicide	Apoplexy, Death	Gallows

nitana, than of the works most specially devoted to the art of healing.

“There are two things which I attribute to you, and which conspire to awaken confidence in your character and judgment: the one is your decided aversion to all personal strife,* the other your well-grounded recommendation of water-drinking.† The accidental remark that abstinence tends to produce serenity of mind, is one that I can heartily subscribe to.‡

“Should I ever take upon me to publish my sentiments on dietetics; my rules for the promotion of happiness will be based on a few propositions; tending to manifest that health is a virtue, cheerfulness a duty. I would show that one cannot be too deeply impressed with the feeling of aversion to sickness, for a sickness which is incurable is not only a clog, but a lie against our destined lot. The *valere aude* I would put forth as the general salutation.

“Be not uneasy, revered doctor, lest I should require too

* Account, p. 9.—“I heartily condemn and detest all personal reflections, all malicious and unmannerly turns, and all false and unjust representations, as unbecoming gentlemen, scholars, and Christians; and disprove and undo both performances, as far as in me lies, in everything that does not strictly and barely relate to the argument.”

† Ibid, p. 21.—“I firmly believe, and as much convinced as I am of any natural effect, that water-drinking only will preserve all the opulent healthy from every mortal distemper; and that a diet of milk and seeds, with water-drinking only, duly continued, and prudently managed, with proper evacuation, air, and exercise, is the most infallible antidote for all the obstinate diseases of the body, and distemperatures of the mind so far as it depends on the body, the present state of things will permit; and that it will cure every disorder in the body, curable, and render the distemperature of the mind more tractable; and that, in all events, it will make both more tolerable than they can possibly be otherwise.”

‡ Account, p. 50.—“Their seasons of abstinence is one reason of the cheerfulness or serenity of some Roman Catholic and southern countries.”

much ; I know well that it is easier to ask than to answer ; easier to give rules than to follow them ; to recommend moderation to the maiden in the dance,—to the youth in his convivial meetings, or in his love,—to the day labourer in his work,—is a thankless and superfluous undertaking ; to advise a captive to take exercise in the open air sounds like a mockery.

“Neither do I conceal from myself that rigorous cautions and prohibitions are, for the most part, pushed too far.

“My efforts then will be limited to the endeavour to exhibit the simplest means by which to preserve continual cheerfulness, to have the body not for an accessory in evil, but a friend, and, if necessary, to lay out one’s life to some useful purpose.

“It must be plainly confessed that most are unhappy on this account, namely, that they live in dread of the possibility of misfortune, give up too readily to it when it occurs, and do not sufficiently notice its palliative circumstances.

“The full experience of happiness appears, to the anxious and timid mind, something so doubtful that they pray that it may not be sent. They consider not that prosperity, that is, a wise self-confidence, awaits the bold.

“Regrets accompany most events ; we smile at the devotee who lacerates himself amongst the tombs, and yet we ourselves weep over the experience which has been collected in the grave of the past. As mendicants live by their sores, so we suck consolation out of our inward weakness.

“But help may be sought in a very different direction, by being strict in self-government, the master of our own house, and own person ; *nunquam retrorsum*, that is to say, never gloomy. Cheerfulness is to be sought in free intercourse with Nature, with men, or with books ; and the

purest enjoyment is preserved, like seed-corn in the earth, to spring up in gloomy weather.

“The saying that a man’s stomach is his destiny is essentially true ; the best race-horses take the least food. *Mors in olla* means, not death in the pot itself, not in its leaden or copper lining, but in its contents ; he who fills his stomach too full, must not wonder if sometimes his heart is full also.

“Physicians must perseveringly enforce a reasonable system of dietetics ; by this means they will not merely contribute to invigorate life, but to prolong it.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO DR. CHEYNE.

Dr. Cheyne appears to have been selected by our author to his honorable position on two accounts.

First, for his peaceable and peace-loving disposition.

Secondly, for his opinions on dietetics. Each of these points have a close connexion with the morals of medical life, and each will bear a little illustration.

With regard to the first, Dr. Cheyne was an eminent example of forbearance for the sake of peace. The plan of treatment which he had himself tried, and for which he was so warm an advocate, was not only assailed by medical men, but he became, in consequence of his opinions, the butt and jest of the wit and sensualist. The author, in his preface to the ‘English Malady,’ says, most feelingly, “Some good-natured retainers to the profession on the publication of my book of Long Life and Health, proclaimed everywhere that I was turned mere enthusiast, and resolved all things into an allegory and analogy ; advised people to turn monks, to run into deserts and live on roots, herbs, and wild fruits ; in fine, that I was at bottom a mere leveller, and for destroying order, rank, and property,

every one's but my own ; but that sneer had its day, and vanished into smoke ; others, that I had eaten my book, and recanted my doctrine and system, as they were pleased to term it, and was returned again to the devil, the world, and the flesh. This joke I have also stood ; I have been slain again and again, both in verse and prose, but I thank God I am still alive and well."

Not a single bitter expression does he utter against his slanderers ; in opposing the opinions of his time, he had but one object—that object which ought, at all times, to be paramount in the breast of the physician—the doing good in his day and generation. It is impossible, on reading the beautiful sentiments contained in the preface to his 'English Malady,' to withhold from the author our tribute of respect, or to be wholly unconscious of a desire to imitate his character.

As we shall have another opportunity of speaking of the dissensions of medical men, we shall here refrain from pursuing the subject any further.

2. Dr. Cheyne's opinions on dietetics. These he considered as having a very close connexion with disorders both of the mind and body. It does not enter into our plan to discuss the merits of his views, or of any other views of the subject, as regards the treatment of disease. It is, we believe, a subject of immense importance in medical practice, and one which is far from receiving commensurate attention at the present time. Strict attention to dietetics has been one grand means by which empiricism has attained success—a success which has been favoured by a corresponding neglect on the part of established practitioners. Hydropathy and Homœopathy owe much of their celebrity to this source, and whenever men of talent and judgment have condescended to avail themselves of this simple means, the results have been highly beneficial. Our subject leads us rather to inquire what is the moral bearing of the

question. And here we think it distinctly the duty of the medical man to use all his influence with his patients to adopt and persevere in such systems of diet as he may have reason to think will, in their particular cases, most tend to preserve the *mens sana in corpore sano*, not allowing them to suppose it is sufficient to do so during the period of sickness or convalescence, but habitually to look upon such care as a preventive of disease, and enforcing that view which Professor Marx takes, that it is a duty incumbent upon every one to take a rational care of his health, as the great means by which he may be enabled to perform efficiently those duties to which Providence has appointed him. Persons will often pay much attention to these views, when urged with all the weight of medical authority, who would laugh to scorn the very same opinions if proceeding from some judicious non-medical friend. Most persons desire health, and would make sacrifices to procure it; but many would submit more easily to severe remedies to remove disease than to a little habitual self-denial to preserve health, and the very simplicity of the means operates against their recognition. They cannot believe that a little indulgence in one thing one day, and in another at some other time, can do them any harm; and thus the medical man is often obliged to have recourse to strict and definite rules, rather than to lay down general principles.

As to the particular system of diet to be recommended, that is a question which pertains to medical treatment, and on which we shall not enter further than to observe, that the diet which Dr. Cheyne so zealously advocated, namely, milk with seeds, &c., does not appear to us so suited to the human constitution, at least in this country in the great majority of cases, as a diet of easily digestible animal food, combined with vegetables. It is the part of a sound medical judgment to discriminate what is best in each case. The quack treats all alike, but the judicious practitioner

adapts his means to the result he wishes to obtain. In all cases patients want reminding that quantity is at least as much to be attended to as quality. A most important part of the subject of dietetics is the use or avoidance of stimulating liquors, a subject which has such a close connexion with the moral as well as physical well-being of man, that it is of great consequence a medical man should form correct notions respecting it, since his advice will often affect the deepest interests of his patients. His whole weight, both of precept and example, ought to be thrown into the scale of temperance. And as we say this, we are reminded that to no one are habits of strict sobriety more indispensable than to the medical man himself. In almost every calling of life occasional excess is less dangerous to others if not to ourselves than in the medical profession ; for at what hour of the day or night is a practitioner secure that a valuable life may not be suspended upon his having the full unclouded use of his mental faculties? Nothing can be conceived so likely to be fatal to the reputation of a medical man as his being suspected of intemperate habits. And every young man who desires to succeed in his profession, ought to resolve firmly to keep at a distance from all associates likely to involve him in suspicion of the kind. Dr. Cheyne, it seems, on coming to London, took a contrary course, with a view of obtaining practice. He does not tell us what number of patients he got by his convivial associations, but whatever might be the case in those days, when hard drinking was common in the higher and middling classes, and was considered as a something indispensable to the manly character, we may safely predicate that the course he adopted on first coming to London would be much more likely to bar a man from a practice than to get one. A jovial, boon companion is the very last person to whom a man would intrust his own life, or the lives of those dear to him.

Many cases occur in practice in which the patient is one in whom excessive drinking has brought on the disease. The sufferer perhaps himself acknowledges his error, and is disposed to listen to good advice, and to form good resolutions for the future. And now, if the medical attendant be himself a consistently sober and temperate man, if he can add the weight of established character and recognised example to professional influence, he may prove the best and most useful of counsellors, and may enjoy the enviable and godlike distinction of being at once the agent of moral and physical good. Let him not, through false delicacy, or cold indifference, or the fear of giving offence, shrink from the solemn duty which lies before him. Let him to the utmost of his ability point out the absolute necessity of a change of habits, using warning, encouragement, and comfort, as the case may require. Professor Marx speaks of the use of visible objects in affecting the mind, and by the side of Dr. Lettsom's thermometer we may place the instance of the American physician who affixed to the doors of public-houses a series of engravings representing the human stomach as affected by intoxicating liquors, with this inscription, "Drunkards, behold what you will become if you continue to drink."

As with regard to food so with regard to stimulants, there is great variety as to the temperaments, constitutions, and habits of life of individuals, requiring varieties of regimen, and affording scope for the exercise of judgment. Dr. Cheyne and Professor Marx are on the side of exclusive water-drinking, and there are, no doubt, a great many cases, in which this plan would be the best that could be recommended; but again, there are other cases in which a moderate use of stimulants is (in our opinion) beneficial; such is generally the case we think with those who are exposed to much mental or bodily exertion, and we see that persons thus living enjoy good health and attain advanced age.

There is, however, such a wide latitude in the use of the words *temperance* and *moderation*, that a medical man must be on his guard, and not allow himself to be deceived by false pretences.

In connexion with the subject of dietetics, there is one other topic which has a moral bearing, and this respects the poorer classes. In recommending plans of diet, medical men should always have an eye to the circumstances of their patients. There are some remarks well worth attending to on this subject, in a letter published amongst Dr. Lettsom's correspondence.

"It is a misfortune for persons of slender income to be accustomed to expensive diet; it is no less a misfortune for them to be taught to imagine that their health depends on such diet. If medical men would take the trouble, as Dr. Tissot did, to study for the poor, it would be a truly patriotic, as well as benevolent exercise of their talents. In cases of debility, and such cases are now common among the poor, relief can only be expected from gentle remedies and suitable regimen; but if the poor are told the only remedy is that they must live like the rich, what is the consequence? Sometime ago," the writer continues, "I sent a woman-servant in a weak state of health to a medical man of eminence for his opinion on her case. His prescription was as follows. You should live well, drink port wine daily, ride out on a double horse, and if you could do it, it would be well in the summer to go to the sea-side and bathe. What was this but saying, if you were the mistress instead of the servant, you might regain your health? Is not this adding pain of mind to weakness of body, and producing useless regrets, if not evil repinings? With a little more study, might not some simple regimen, at once nutritive and inexpensive, have been devised."

In respect to the third point mentioned, the duty of cultivating serenity and cheerfulness of mind, both Dr. Cheyne

and Professor Marx evidently regard it as having a very close connexion with moderation in eating and drinking.

Positive rules, however, even here admit of exceptions. It is mentioned in an article in the *British and Foreign Medical Review* (No. 33, page 53), that whilst the temper of a gentleman of sanguine temperament became less excitable during the time he lived on vegetables, an individual of an opposite temperament was observed during the time he lived on a reduced diet to be more irritable. The reviewer adds, "Instances might be quoted in which a diet of vegetables alone has appeared to be most conducive to the higher powers of the mind. Instances also of the converse might be adduced. If we were taxed to enumerate those causes that counteract the beneficial influence upon society of education and the general diffusion of knowledge, we should class the errors committed by the community in reference to food and the nutrition of the body as the most prominent among the number."

Marx quaintly, but pointedly, observes, if a man fills his stomach too full, he must not wonder if sometimes his heart is too full also. Cheyne says, "When I see a gloomy, melancholy, heavy, stupid, thoughtless, joyless creature, much more a whimsical, anomalous or libertine, free-living, or free-thinking mortal, I conclude him in a bad state of health, under a dangerous bodily disease, or under a perpetual mal-regimen, which will soon terminate in one, whatever appearances be to the contrary, and, sooner or later, I have been always confirmed in the justness of this opinion, having always found a real chronical or acute specified disease to manifest itself at last, and become the crisis of what these oddities and enormities were the remote and elementary symptoms. For I am convinced that calmness, serenity, cheerfulness, and common sense (at least in things level to our natural capacities and education), and an esteem and love of virtue, and what promotes it, are the constant

attendants and only infallible symptoms of perfect bodily and intellectual (or of *sans mens in corpore sano*) health ; and pretending to be wise out of common sense, or happy out of common life, is with me one of the symptoms of a cephalic or nervous distemper."

He sums up all by saying, "On the whole I think that the lightest and the least food may be justly termed the shortest and most effectual antidote, and the most universal remedy for all distempers of the body, and errors and mistakes of the mind that depend upon, or have any relation to, the body, that the wit of man can suggest or invent." Professor Marx excellently says, "Cheerfulness is to be sought for by free intercourse with men, with books, and with nature." As the maintenance of a cheerful state of mind in invalids is a branch of the subject with which medical men are much concerned, it may not be useless here to mention that the late excellent Rev. Robert Anderson of Brighton, was of opinion that a considerable variety in reading, in those cases of sickness where nervous weakness does not preclude mental application, is a great means of preserving a healthy tone of mind in invalids, and a legitimate method of supplying that stimulus which those in health derive from natural association and social intercourse. It is mentioned that, during the last few months of his life, and when shut out from society, he found great solace in reading the Duke of Wellington's Dispatches and Madame D'Arblay's Memoirs, and also some works of a lighter kind.

If the physician himself be a man of literary tastes and well-cultivated mind, it is often in his power to excite or keep up in the mind of his patient an interest in such pursuits, and by a few well-timed questions or criticisms to render his visit quite a bright spot in the day. It is related of Coleridge, that when a student at Cambridge he left the University on some disgust, and enlisted into a regiment,

under the name of Silas Tomkin Comberbatch. His officers, having some suspicion of the state of the case, put him on guard in the hospital till they could privately ascertain whether any one was missing. Here he used to entertain his sick comrades with long stories of the Thirty Years' War. The interest he then excited, led the poor fellows frequently to declare that "Comberbatch's stories did them more good than all the doctor's medicine;" and probably, the cheerfulness thus kept up was an ingredient in their cure.

Professor Marx has but little sympathy for that querulous spirit, that incessant complaining of ill health, which some habitually cherish and practise. He asserts that health is a virtue, cheerfulness a duty; and these are sentiments which a medical man will sometimes find it incumbent upon him to enforce; but to this subject we may probably have occasion to refer hereafter.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF JEAN NOEL HALLÉ.

Jean Noel Hallé was born at Paris on the 6th of January, 1755, of a family many branches of which had distinguished themselves in the arts.* His father, his grandfather, and one of his uncles had been artists of note, and he had also cultivated a taste for painting during the long period he resided at Rome with his father, who was the Director of the French Academy in that city. Probably the many objects calculated to inspire a love for the arts in this celebrated capital might have been his principal inducement to these pursuits; but it is certain that he laboured with great assiduity in studying the works of the ancient masters, as well as the great artists of the 16th century, during his residence at Rome. Amongst those with whom his father associated were the two learned French monks Jacquier and Lesueur, the commentators of Newton, and their conversation opened to our hero a new prospect.

Hallé was characterised by possessing a singularly correct judgment, and those sciences which are founded upon calculation and experience afford more attractions to this leading mental characteristic than the arts, to the successful

* Claude Guy Hallé, his grandfather, Noel Hallé, his father, the two Restouts, Jouvenet, La Fosse, were his relations, as also was the poet La Fosse, the author of 'Les Moulins.'

cultivation of which a vivid imagination and great sensibility are the principal requisites.

His domestic connexions on his return to France confirmed his mind in the new direction it had received, for Aimé Charles Lorry,* his maternal uncle, one of the most intellectual and distinguished physicians at the close of the last century, was charmed with that solid judgment which he manifested, and desired to receive him as his pupil, and make him his successor, so that he soon gave himself up entirely to the pursuit of medicine.

The protectors of his family endeavoured to draw him aside from this decision, depicting before his imagination the more brilliant career which the study of finance would open to him, but nothing could shake his resolution, and after having attended the medical schools according to the prescribed regulations, he took his first degree in 1776, and was so much distinguished for judgment and clearness of mind in his first exercises, that the founders of the Royal Society of Medicine requested him to be a companion of their labours, even before he had received his doctor's diploma. This precocious honour afterwards prevented him from obtaining the title of Doctor Regent in the Faculty of Medicine. Fourcroy and several other men of first-rate talent suffered the same disgrace from the same cause. This puerile jealousy which had led the Faculty to regard the Royal Society of Medicine as a rival body, had also induced it to vow an implacable hatred to those of its own members who had consented to belong to it. When it is remembered what antipathies this jealousy excited amongst the physicians of the capital, and the ridiculous dissensions and odious satires it produced, it may give a favorable idea of the mildness of character and modesty of Monsieur Hallé, and also the regard which those qualities

* Son of Francis Lorry and father of Paul Charles Lorry, both professors of civil law.

inspired, that while the highest reputations were not respected in the writings of the day, he was less vituperated than any of his associates. Elevated indeed beyond all intrigue, and only desirous of increasing his professional knowledge by all those aids of science which could assist him, and neither pluming himself upon the success of his discoveries, nor seeking popular applause, he neither wounded the vanity, nor alarmed the interest of any one. The study of medicine appeared to him quite sufficient to occupy the whole of life. In his view of the subject, there was nothing which could influence man morally or physically that did not belong to this noble science, and he therefore manifested so disinterested a feeling towards it, as to regard every means beneath his notice for obtaining public confidence, except such as were truly desirous of it. He was therefore continually to be found at the bedside of the sick, watching the progress of disease, or in his own room, engaged in the study of practical medicine, chemistry, and even of political economy, as far as it related to the benefit of the different classes of society. Nor did he neglect anatomy and physiology, but still regarding these sciences as subservient only in their relations to the health of men generally or of individuals.

It will at once be evident that after such a lengthened course of study, and with such enlarged views in reference to medicine, he was in no hurry to come before the public; and, if we except his labours in the Royal Society of Medicine, of which he was one of the most industrious members,* and the care which he exercised in the publication

* We find in the collection of Memoirs of the Royal Society of Medicine a paper upon the properties and effects of the root of Dentalaire (*Plumbago-Europæa*), on the treatment of itch, observations upon the phenomena and variations which the urine presents in a state of health; a paper upon the post-mortem examinations of two patients, the morbid appearances of which were found very different

of some of his uncle's writings, we shall find such was the case.

In 1784 he published an edition of Lorry's work, entitled '*De præcipuis morborum mutationibus et conversationibus.*' He also published in the '*Memoirs of the Royal Society of Medicine,*' the observations of the same author upon the volatile and odorous particles thrown off from vegetable and animal substances. At a later period he prepared for the press an edition of the writings of Borden upon the glands and cellular tissue.

We are not aware that he published any work of his own, or took any public employment until the year 1795, when he was above 40 years of age. Nevertheless, while he so thoroughly furnished his own mind, he did not remain useless to others; his practice became insensibly extended, although it was of a peculiar kind, for the competence which his family possessed enabled him to select for his patients the sick poor, whom he most diligently attended, aiding them not only by his medical skill, but in pecuniary matters; often conferring his charity in such a delicate manner as to spare the feelings of those who might have felt hurt in accepting it. More than one individual found after his convalescence that all the expenses occa-

from what the previous symptoms would seem to have indicated. In the first there was discovered a scirrhus induration of the stomach, and in the second a degenerated state of the kidneys. A memoir upon the effect of camphor in large doses, and upon the property which this medicine has of counteracting the effects of opium. Reflections upon secondary fevers and upon the influence they exert in smallpox, and many interesting observations relative to the questions submitted to the Society in reference to public hygiene. There was especially in 1784 an important paper upon the nature and effects of malaria arising from privies, read at the time when the Society had to examine the preservative which the oculist Janin pretended to have discovered in acetic acid. This memoir was printed separately in 1785.

sioned by his illness had been paid, and only discovered by careful inquiry that his physician had provided for all. His charity received its reward, and, what to his benevolent mind was better still, he was permitted to exercise it at a period when it was more than ever necessary. His father and grandfather had each received the badge of St. Michael, but previously to being admitted into this order it was indispensable for the family to be ennobled. In consequence of this, when the Convention ordered the nobles to quit Paris, he was of course included in this exile, but was exempted from it as being the physician of the poor, and it was now that he was called to give his aid in another kind of suffering than that of disease, to avert dangers which threatened each individual, to give when it was possible the means of escape. Such duties appeared to him not less sacred than the exercise of his profession. He penetrated into the prison of Malesherbes, giving him consolation, and receiving his last adieus. At the Lyceum of Arts he drew up the petition for the pardon of Lavoisier, and during the two years which may be called the age of misery and shame, he occupied himself assiduously in performing a thousand other services to the unfortunate, for doing which the principal condition he required was secrecy. But what modesty concealed, time has in part revealed.

The period, at length, arrived when M. Hallé was called to teach and to propagate by his writings the art to which he had consecrated his energies; to Fourcroy was intrusted, in 1794 and 1795, the order to reestablish a school of medicine; and he conferred upon Hallé the Chair of Physique Médicale and Hygiène, and shortly after, in 1796, at the creation of the Institute of France, he was named member of the department of medicine and surgery. In 1806 Corvisart, who was entirely occupied with his duties as physician to Napoleon, chose him for his colleague

in his chair at the College of France, and, in a short time, gave up the Institute entirely to him. Meanwhile M. Hallé was not less active in the Society of Medicine; there he successively introduced some of the most important subjects of medical science, either in reports which he was requested to read, or in memoirs where he gave his own views. 'Observations upon Vaccination' were the most important of all, for he took it up from the first, and laboured continually to propagate its benefits. In 1812, when it had been proved by an experience sufficiently long, he carefully examined its past progress, inquired into the cause of its failure, and thus contributed to conciliate that confidence which was due to this admirable preservative. He must be considered as one of the most celebrated propagators of vaccination, and France will couple his name with Woodville and Larochevoucault; even Italy owes to him a particular remembrance in this respect. He was employed, in 1810, to introduce vaccination into the states of Lucca and Tuscany, and the public experiments which he made there—the arguments which he used in its favour have contributed to render his name popular in that country.

In his lectures to the Faculty, M. Hallé took that view of medicine most consistent with reason; he dwelt, especially upon those phenomena of the animal economy, which were influenced by the same laws which governed the physical sciences; he considered that physicians had too much depreciated these sciences. "The problem of nature," said he, "is one composed of known and constant, and of unknown and variable elements; and it is a great error to suppose that, in order to resolve and estimate the unknown, and to fix the fleeting shadows of the variable, it is necessary to neglect those elements which are constant and calculable." This was, indeed, the fundamental principle of his course of lectures, which have never been published; but the articles which his pupils have

extracted from them for the 'Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales' will give an idea of them. Deep thought, sound judgment, and vast erudition characterize the whole. The progress of physical science pervaded his subjects, and he applied its laws in a most ingenious manner ; his erudition was displayed, and strikingly so, in his lectures to the College of France, in which he took the opposite view of medicine, and considered the economy of the internal alterations in the system, in which, for the most part, physical laws do not apply. In these lectures he took for his subject the history of experience in medicine from the earliest writers on the subject, commencing his course by an interpretation of the works of Hippocrates. But he did not take this author as a display for his learning, as so many are now in the habit of doing, who know, nevertheless, little enough of his works, referring to them as a collection of infallible models to which nothing can be added or taken away ; but he saw in them the first attempts of genius to reduce to fixed rules a series of facts, which seemed composed only of exceptions, and they excited in his mind the greater admiration, because that, although some errors were found in them, they yet contained most just and profound observations, especially when it is considered that these observations were made at that period when the world was totally ignorant of everything that could lead to such knowledge, except a careful watching of the progress of disease. Through the great knowledge he possessed of the Greek language, and the thorough acquaintance he had with the philosophers and physicians of antiquity, he was enabled to suggest many explanations of obscure passages of the Father of Medicine ; and it is much to be regretted that, neither his own notes, nor those of any of his auditors, have been found sufficiently complete for the publication of this course, or the principal parts of it, in the same way as has been

done with his lectures on Hygiene. His object was to follow the progress of observation through every age, and to show how new facts led to more exact generalization; and how, on the contrary, science has been almost invariably retarded by systems. These lectures were a sort of experimental logic in which he exercised his pupils, nor could they have a better master than the man whose judgment had been remarkable even from infancy.

M. Hallé was deficient in no knowledge which was necessary to make him an excellent professor; he possessed a thorough knowledge of the accessory sciences, and he had read the works of all the great physicians in their own language. His own experience was most extensive, and his practice had been pursued on the soundest principles of medical science; but it is not usually, at the age of 40, that an individual acquires that facility of elocution necessary to fix the attention of a large number of auditors; it need not, therefore, excite surprise that, in regard to this, he somewhat failed, especially when it is considered how few exceptions occur, in this respect, amongst the numbers of men of education who appear in our legislative assemblies. Nevertheless, whatever was deficient in his utterance was thoroughly made up by the profundity of his reasoning, perhaps it was even this depth of knowledge,—this vast extent of science,—those multiplied points in which he viewed his objects, which contributed to render his lessons less agreeable to the generality of young students. In the preliminary studies only clear and simple rules are desired; ignorance alone could advance such in a complex science like that of medicine. But if his diligent and well-informed pupils be appealed to, such as would not allow themselves to be disheartened by first difficulties, whether they have derived benefit from his lectures, they are always ready, on every occasion, to testify how much they owe to him.

Indeed it is from this chosen number that are derived the greater part of the talented physicians and celebrated professors, who are the ornaments of their profession at the present day.

The practice of M. Hallé corresponded in some respects to the extent of his studies ; he knew so much that he had a doubt in every case, and in the treatment of acute diseases nothing is so painful as a doubt. Patients and their attendants generally like a physician to be decisive in such cases, but he was preferred in chronic diseases, where immediate treatment was not required, and in this kind of practice he enjoyed the highest reputation ; those, indeed, who trusted not to public opinion, never called in question the judgment of a physician whose right to judge was incontestable.

Corvisart, when he bequeathed the portrait of Stoll to Hallé, said in his will, that he left it to that physician whom he most esteemed. He had most especially the art of gaining the affections of his patients, the greater part of whom belonged not to that class where his charity could be exercised, but his benevolence could adapt itself to every circumstance. Those whom he attended became in some measure his children ; he was to them a friend, nay, a parent, for they perceived in him more than the physician. When he could not relieve their diseases, he occupied their mind with agreeable conversation instead of sorrowful thoughts, which would only have aggravated their distress ; and when their circumstances were such as precluded him from exercising his charity, he found other means of acting kindly. He not only did not accept fees from his medical brethren and pupils when they consulted him, which is the usual practice of all medical men, but he would never receive them from artists, because he was the son and grandson, nephew and grand-nephew, of well-known painters, and therefore he considered himself as belonging to their family ; nor would

he receive them from ecclesiastics for this reason, that if their income was small, he ought not to lessen it, and if large, whatever they had to spare he considered ought to be given to the poor : he almost always found similar reasons, and generally the privileged only were allowed to make him a recompense for his skill ; but there was one privilege that he exercised more precious to his eyes than any other ; the privilege of prescribing for those who could not afford to pay. Returning home at the close of the day, exhausted with fatigue, it was, perhaps, announced to him that a lady wished to consult him ; he would desire his servant to advise her to go to one of his medical brethren, a message is returned that she cannot do so, for she has nothing to pay him with ; this is an appeal he cannot withstand. “ Oh, in this case, then,” replies he, “ I have no choice, I must attend to her.” His generosity was ever prominent ; he invariably gave the entire profits of his works to the young persons who rendered him assistance in collecting materials for them. Having been charged with the task of editing a new pharmacopœia, he employed the sum which was allowed by government for this purpose in the completion of the hall of the Faculty of Medicine. Happy in the good that he did, happy in his success, happy in his family, M. Hallé seemed to possess what is beyond every other earthly blessing ; his health was robust, and although occasionally troubled with a little fulness of blood, prompt bleeding immediately relieved him, but all at once he found himself suffering from stone in the bladder. Yet even in such painful circumstances, when most persons would have been only occupied about themselves, his unbounded charity was still active ; before he underwent the operation of lithotomy, though suffering great pain, he yet went to see some poor persons whom he supported, fearing that his long absence might appear to them an act of forgetfulness.

The operation was successfully performed, but a conges-

tion of the lungs followed, which was suddenly fatal on the 11th of February, 1822. He was but 68 years of age, and it is probable that if we had possessed a little earlier those means of obtaining information in chest affections which we now have, he would still have been alive and full of activity. The place he occupied in the Academy was filled by M. Chaussier, and that in the College of France by M. Laennec, who also has since been cut off very young from a profession which he had already enriched, and to which he had promised still more important discoveries.*

LETTER TO JEAN NOEL HALLÉ.

“The history of your life, can well attest the sufferings which a medical man of fine feelings has to endure ; and, therefore, I shall find indulgence, if I venture to impart to you some sentiments respecting the trying hours of our profession. No one will better understand me.

“It was but the painful sequel to a much tried life, when at the age of 68, shortly before your death, you submitted to the anguish of lithotomy, which nothing but the force of resignation could have enabled you to sustain with your habitual gentleness.†

“To what extent you were the protector, the friend, and the helper of the poor, was shown in a time when a part of mankind had ceased to be human.

“It was yours to experience what it is to serve others with our whole soul, and yet to be misjudged by them, and then, as it were by the majesty of innocence, to compel esteem from the madman.

* From the collection of *Eloges historiques*, read at the meetings of the Royal Institution of France, by Baron Cuvier.

† Cuvier, *Eloges historiques*. Paris, 1827. T. iii, p. 345.

“The hound set on against his benefactor often recognizes him in the moment of attack, and instead of tearing, covers him with caresses.

“In the tumult of unbridled passion, you were enabled to preserve calmness of mind for yourself and others.

“To you it was permitted to visit Malesherbes in his imprisonment, and to receive his farewell; you drew up the petition for Lavoisier.

“Could the stones of Paris speak, they would testify that you alone wiped away the tears of the sorrowing.

“Every project in medicine tending to the benefit of society might safely reckon on you as its patron and protector. How untiringly did you contribute to the spread of Vaccination!

“You have kept no record of personal sacrifices and thanks received; where the deficit lay it is easy to divine.

“You acted benevolently with a full participating heart; you were rather surprised when in any case gratitude followed, than shocked when it was wanting.

“Franklin relates that he lent a sum of money, and when the debtor would have returned it to him, he requested him to lend it to some other person in similar need, and so on continually. Thus did you consider property as a deposit—a debt to be discharged.

“But if the physician works with his mind as Fenelon teaches that men ought generally to work, is it not true that the burden of the profession, or rather the addition of selfishness, often presses like lead on his heart?

“Those who are conversant only with business or mechanical employments, can scarcely imagine what a heavy heart the medical man takes with him out of the house of death.

“There are indeed physicians who look upon disease and death merely in the abstract, and who would seem to have to do not with the *sick* but with *sickness*, not with the *dying*

but with *death*, who practise *lege artis*, and content themselves with common-place morality ; with such I shall not trouble you.

“ Neither does death awake any overwhelming compassion, in cases where the cessation of suffering appears as a benefit.

“ In such instances, sickness deals with the invalid as a gardener does with a tree which he wishes to transplant, and whose roots he therefore carefully loosens from the soil. The separation from their accustomed habits and relations takes place then so gradually that it comes to be considered like the natural result of preceding changes.

“ But how is it when a dangerous illness falls like a rocket into the house, and now none but the physician can save ? when the life sinks, not gradually and gently like the fluttering of a leaf before it falls from the tree, or the stopping of a watch, but when Nature, like a tragedian, seems to have compressed the most affecting scenes into the last act ?

“ Exhausted, returns the medical man to his house, solacing himself with the hope of forgetting the toils of the day, and renewing his strength in refreshing sleep ; when lo ! at midnight he is summoned to a child who is dying of croup. The parents welcome him as an angel from heaven ; it is the first time for days that they have attended to any one but their own child ; they hang breathless on his expressions ; they scan his features to extract from them his thoughts ; they draw hope from every question, every direction, every gesture ; the mother smiles at him in half desponding thanks because the child is quiet ; the father in emotion grasps him by the hand ; but the quiet is of short duration, the child can cough no more, it bends its head backwards, it stretches out its limbs convulsively to breathe—in vain, it expires.

“ Who else is now the companion to the physician besides the groaning lamentations of the stricken parents ?

“Should he hereafter lose a friend, one perhaps on whom he has cheerfully expended years of toil, self-denial, self-sacrifice, where can he turn for pity?

“From the furnace of his anxieties he is followed by the sighs only of those who intimately share them; few concern themselves about him, who is nevertheless harassed and worn down by his efforts to assuage the woes of others.

“Another practitioner goes with a heart oppressed with grief to his chamber; he is immediately called to a woman in labour, and compelled to perform the operation of craniotomy.

“Nor is it enough that in critical and decisive moments he draws, like the orphan boy in a lottery, he knows not whether a prize or a blank; that, like a swimmer, he has to struggle with the apparent dead; that, like a father confessor, he has to speak consolation at the very gallows, —no, he must pass the ordeal of ignorant and perverted judgments. In thus running the gauntlet of reproaches on the one hand, and envious joy on the other, he must sustain himself by his conscious innocence, as men who are undergoing operations or suffering pain bite a bullet to prevent them crying out.

“For the dying there is an Euthanasia, for the mourner a visit of condolence, but who concerns himself about the suffering physician? And yet he has most frequently to experience that in bereavements the tears of survivors become like aquafortis to his soul, and that powerlessness to save others curdles as it were his own blood.

“But I hear you exclaim, ‘O desine renovare dolores!’ and therefore I will cease to complain, and solace myself with the hope, that as in other respects there have been improvements in the condition of the medical man, so there will be also in regard to consideration shown to their feelings.

“He who has read the letters of Zimmermann which

appeared after his death, will remember that medical attendants in noble houses were formerly accommodated with a *seat* but not with a *chair*, and that domestic physicians were permitted to use riding horses but not leather bridles.

“There is no word of more frequent recurrence in Japan than ‘Patience!’ Golownin’s journey and the narrative of his captivity in that country suffices to teach the European physician contentment. You indeed practised patience and resignation so thoroughly, that you may justly claim the palm of victory.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO JEAN NOEL HALLÉ.

This letter is one of the most interesting of the collection, whether we consider the history of the person to whom it is addressed, or the simple yet powerful painting of medical trials which it contains.

These trials are such as pertain to the Physician,* not as he is a man merely, but as he is a *medical man*; and they are such as attend not merely the practitioner who is maintaining a hard struggle for a livelihood, though on him of course they press with double weight, they affect also the prosperous and successful.

The trials, here described, may be chiefly classed under two heads—the *sorrows of sympathy* and the *sorrows of isolation*.

The first of these, the *sorrows of sympathy*, especially pertain to the medical profession, and woe to him who enters into it without a full appreciation of his requirements in this respect, for his duty and conduct will then

* The reader will mark the wide signification given in the German work to the term physician, the text will sufficiently show that it is of medical practice generally of which the author and the editor are speaking.

be full of inconsistencies. A medical man, more than any other individual, is called to drop in the words of consolation in the hour of trouble, for to him only is often confided the heart-sorrows of his fellow-creatures. What is a medical man worth who has no feeling for his patients,* or who looks upon them merely as puppets, by working with which he is able to make up a certain amount of income! who has not a deep sense of the solemn responsibility of being, to some extent, the guardian of the lives and health, those dearest earthly blessings which constitute the happiness of his fellow-creatures, who is incapable of tasting the sweet pleasure of bringing ease to the sufferer—hope to the drooping—health to those who, without his aid, would sink under disease!

But if he is what he ought to be, a benevolent and feeling man, he will inevitably be subject to the painful sensations and scenes so beautifully touched on in the present letter. He will have to feel the powerlessness beyond a certain limit of human skill—the imperfection of all human knowledge—to reflect, perhaps, with distressing self-accusation on something he might have done better or earlier, &c. &c.

What is to support him under this trial? We answer, high moral and religious principles of action. The humble consciousness that he has striven to do his best, and that events are in the hands of God. He must, indeed, to possess this consolation, *do his best*; neglect no means of self-improvement, make no concessions to indolence or carelessness, or that false pride which prevents us resorting to the opinions of others when we feel ourselves insufficient.†

There are in Dr. Lettsom's correspondence some very

* How forcibly does the author allude to those who consider themselves as having to do not with the sick, but with sickness, not with the dying, but with death.

† Sir Astley Cooper frequently sent his patients for other opinions when he found his own treatment unsuccessful.

interesting remarks on the subject of medical sympathy, which we the rather quote entire, as they afford a beautiful comment on the affecting instances given in Professor Marx's letter of the painful situations in which a medical man is sometimes placed.

Dr. Cuming, in writing to Dr. Lettsom, thus speaks : " You have your pleasures, it is true (such I have felt), and you have well described them ; but does the reverse of the picture, my friend, never present itself ? have you not sometimes felt the humid clay-cold grasp of a respected friend's hand ? have you not seen the lack-lustre eye, the wan, perhaps the distorted, features, and the convulsive pangs of an expiring husband and father ? his bed encircled by an affectionate wife and a group of weeping infants, whose comfort in this world, nay, perhaps, whose subsistence depended upon the life of their parent ? Here, too, you have sensibilities and exquisitibilities, but they are of a different complexion from those that you paint : these rend the very heartstrings, and make us deplore the weakness and impuissance of our art. When these have occurred I have been on the point of abjuring the practice of physic, have wished to inhabit a den in a desert, or have lamented that I had not been bred to the trade of a cobbler."

To which Dr. Lettsom replies, " I did not expect I should ever have occasion to differ in sentiments from Dr. Cuming ; but, with respect to all those dreadful pictures, he has so painfully exhibited of the *impuissance* of our art, I feel, I mean I have experienced, very different impressions. A physician is always supposed to have formed a judicious prognostic, to have foreseen ' the convulsive pangs of an expiring husband and father,' and all the subsequent catalogue of distresses ; but here, my friend, it is that, when in the physician the friend and the divine are combined, his affection, his good sense, and his sym-

pathy pour into the afflicted the oil of comfort ; he soothes the pangs of woe, he mitigates the distress, he finds out something in the wise dispensations of Providence that he carries home to the bosom of affliction. Here it is that he is truly a guardian angel ; his assiduity makes him appear as a sufferer with the family—sympathy unites him to them ; he acquires new ties, new affections—he mourns with them, and his philosophy points out new sources of consolation ; he is beloved—he is become the father of the family,—he is everything that Heaven in kindness deposes, to soften, to dissipate misery : I declare, a conscientious physician, in the midst of his solicitude, experiences here that melancholy joy, that permanent ecstasy which is annexed to the desire of doing good. I have felt the tenderest springs of friendship in such an attitude, and I doubt not but here my classical and feeling friend will go along with me in these ‘exquisitibilities’ of doing all the good we can in these seasons of affectionate distraction.”

Nor must it be forgotten amongst the trials of sympathy those which the medical man suffers in his relation to the sick poor. Who is first appealed to by the destitute in the hour of nature’s suffering ? Nay, who is most ready to attend on such occasions ? It is the medical man. Wherever human misery exists, wherever pain is endured, in the lowest hovels of the poor, where disease and death, contagion with all that is offensive to the outward senses are present, there will be found the medical man, alleviating pain, soothing the sorrowful, smoothing the pillow of death, and offering consolation to the survivors ; and often all this without the slightest expectation of reward. No class of the community, not even the ministers of religion, are called to make such immense personal sacrifices as medical men ; nor is any class so little appreciated for their humanity and generous disinterestedness, at least by the public gene-

rally. Nearly the whole of the charitable institutions for the relief of sickness in Great Britain are attended gratuitously by medical men, and in those cases where the laws have provided for medical relief for the poor, the pittance allowed for medical attendance upon them partakes in too many instances more nearly of the character of insult than proper remuneration. How frequently it happens that the medical man returns home at the close of the day, as it is recorded of Hallé, worn out with anxiety and toil, he is summoned to a poor man who is ill, and from whom he knows he shall never receive remuneration; does he hesitate to go? No! wearied in mind and body, he attends, and however dark and dreary his journey may be, he still pursues it; only intent upon one great principle of duty, the relief of human suffering. But were he not to go? Were he to urge the plea of being fatigued or ill, would his conduct be justified by the public? Alas, no! his is the task to do good, not only without reward, but without its being appreciated, and to suffer unmerited censure from those who are, thoughtlessly, ever ready to condemn. It is true that, amidst these trials, if he be a benevolent man, he still feels the inward satisfaction of having fulfilled the high behest of his duty, and also of having been the instrument of affording relief to the sick and sorrowing. Dr. Simon, in his Introduction to his '*Déontologie Médicale*,' has spoken with cutting but, perhaps, just severity of the ingratitude of the public towards medical men. "When the physician, prodigal of life, sacrifices himself thus to come to the help of all kinds of suffering, when he braves the contagion of plague or cholera, against which his arm is powerless, to mitigate as much as possible the public alarm, society, appreciating the sublimity of such devotion, shows itself, no doubt, generous towards men on whom it imposes tasks so difficult. Nothing of the kind! We say it boldly. The gratitude of the sick towards their medical attendant

is a luxury, a work of supererogation, the practice of some delicate minds, rather partaking of the hallucinations of scrupulosity ; in general, there is a more liberal idea of the office of the medical man, and mankind do not so easily burden their memories with such a useless gratitude ; a little gold amply acquits the claims of such a creditor. So mercantile an appreciation of the devotion of the medical man, is not very well suited to sustain him in the fulfilment of his laborious mission. Is it not presuming a little too much on human strength, to assign to it an object so elevated, and then to shut up all the generous sources from which it may be fed ?”

There is one trait in the character of Hallé, which however much we may admire the spirit which prompted it, we cannot approve, and that is his reluctance to receive fees, even from those who could well afford to pay. It is true that his ample fortune might be quite sufficient to supply all the wants of his family, and, therefore, such a line of conduct was attended with no great sacrifice ; while to his benevolent mind it doubtless afforded him the purest enjoyment. But did none others suffer from such a line of policy ? Was the medical profession so affluent in his day in Paris that there were no men of energy and talent belonging to it, who, without property, without friends, felt their spirits broken, their hearts sickened from want of professional success. Such is too often the case in England, and doubtless the same in France. And if a man of Hallé’s talents and acquirements refused to be remunerated for his professional skill, did it not limit the field for their exertions, and this without doing good to himself ? Dr. Percival, in his ‘Medical Ethics’, says most distinctly on this point :

“A wealthy physician should not give advice *gratis* to the affluent ; because it is an injury to his professional brethren. The office of physician can never be supported

but as a lucrative one, and it is defrauding in some degree the common funds for its support, when fees are dispensed with which might justly be claimed."

Hallé might have received his fees, and still devoted them to the purposes of benevolence, as Radcliffe and Lettsom did.

With regard also to his liberality to the clergy, we do not quite agree; for we consider that payment for professional advice ought to be received from those clergymen who are wealthy, as well as from laymen; we much admire Percival's view of this subject; he says:

"Clergymen who experience the *res angusta domi* should be visited gratuitously by the faculty; and this exemption should be an acknowledged general rule, that the feeling of individual obligation may be rendered less oppressive. But such of the clergy as are qualified, either from their stipends or fortunes, to make a reasonable remuneration for medical attendance, are not more privileged than any other order of patients."*

With regard to medical men and their families, there ought to be but one rule on the subject, and that in accordance with the views of Percival: "All members of the profession, together with their wives and children, should be attended gratuitously by any one or more of the faculty residing near them, whose assistance may be required." He adds, indeed, that "if their circumstances be affluent, a pecuniary acknowledgment should not be *declined*, for no obligation ought to be imposed which the party would rather compensate than contract." But we think this exception calculated to impair the feeling of independence among medical men in less prosperous circumstances, and that it is far better that *gratuitous* attendance should be universal to all members of the profession and their families,

* Medical Ethics, p. 400.

whatever be their incomes. Where expense in travelling is incurred, that of course ought to be defrayed by the party benefited.

The other trials of feeling mentioned, peculiar to a medical man, seem to arise out of his isolated position. Few but those of his own profession can enter into his feelings, or sympathise with them, and when sickness comes near himself or his family, he has, less than others, the comfort of hope. He is so conversant with every symptom, every ailment, that his mind is apt to get into a morbid state through his very familiarity with disease, and hence it has often been remarked that medical men are bad patients. If it be, indeed, the fact that medical men receive less of general sympathy in the domestic and personal trials which befall them, it may, perhaps, arise from this, that they are supposed to be so sufficient for themselves that sympathy is deemed almost impertinent. Another and a sadder cause, when sickness befalls them in their own persons, is, that they are compelled to conceal it as much and as long as possible, lest they should be deemed unfit for their duties. There is, indeed, a sad want of gratitude and generous feeling sometimes displayed in this respect. On the first indication that a medical man's health is failing, persons will begin to relax in their adherence to him, and to look about for some new candidate, when a little patience and forbearance on their part might enable him, who has, perhaps, many a time stood beside their couch of suffering, to regain his exhausted strength, and preserve his position. A beautiful instance of consideration and kindness is mentioned in the life of the late excellent, and noble-minded Dr. Arnold, when he was attacked by the fatal seizure which deprived, in so brief a space, our country and church of one of their brightest ornaments; he objected to his wife's wish immediately to summon medical aid, that the hour was early, and that he

did not like to disturb Mr. Bucknell who had been recently ill. We are far, however, from believing that such instances are singular.

The last species of trial which is referred to by Professor Marx, as peculiarly incident to the medical man's life, is *hasty and unjust censure*. Against this his best earthly protection will be found in the gradual enlightenment of the public mind on medical subjects, an increased justness of estimate as to what medicine can do and what it cannot, and an increased sense of the impropriety, to say nothing less, of positive and rash judgment on matters at once so delicate and so difficult of decision.

There are some remarks and suggestions on this species of trial in the biography of Dr. Hope, which are well worth attending to. "None but those who have themselves been in the profession, or who have been admitted into the most secret confidence of a professional man, can tell the anxieties which attend him In every step he takes his character is pledged; and so delicate is the nature of a good name, so easily is it tarnished, that while one rash act may demolish it for ever, its brilliancy cannot be much enhanced by a judicious one. Who then can tell the prudence and foresight which must belong to every successful physician? Who can reckon the anxieties that disturb his peace? While the generality of men have little minds, no prudent man who is dependent on others will dare to despise little things. It is really curious to know the trifles which may make a man obnoxious." It is added, "Dr. Hope took the very wise precaution of preserving all letters which he received, and copies of all that he wrote on professional business. When any little circumstance occurred which he thought capable of misconstruction, he immediately took notes of the facts and obtained the signature of witnesses. He thus supplied himself with documentary evidence, which might at any time be produced After

the lapse of several years, he sometimes found that the most serious charges were based on trivial incidents, and he then rejoiced to be furnished with documents which at once removed every shade from his character.”*

We do not say that it is always necessary to be as particular in this respect as Dr. Hope, for in the end truth generally triumphs, and the man of worth and talent, however calumniated and oppressed for a time, ultimately, in most cases, rises to his proper position. It appears to us indeed that Dr. Hope was rather too sensitive on some points; probably the high sense of moral rectitude in his own mind might lead him to expect a similar sensitiveness in the minds of others; but experience proves this not to be the case, for there are many persons, even amongst the well-educated, who, without the slightest intention of acting wrong, are very apt, when discussing their own or their neighbours' illnesses, rashly to question the judgment and practice of medical men. In such circumstances it seems to us, except in a very flagrant case, beneath the dignity of a medical man to pay attention to such idle gossip. Nevertheless to the public we would respectfully say, be tender of the reputation of your medical attendant, and of him who is not your medical attendant, for your own sake as much as for his, since nothing more tends to embarrass and cloud the judgment (perhaps in itself excellent) of the timid, especially of the young practitioner, than the consciousness of being watched by jealous eyes, and commented upon by unscrupulous tongues.

Taking the above considerations in view, is it kind, is it Christian, for a non-medical person to judge harshly of the practice of a medical man who has not only done his best, but has had difficulties to contend with in the case, which were only apparent to the practical eye of the pro-

* Hope's Life, pp. 118-19.

fessional person? Forbear such censure then, as unkind and ungenerous.

To the medical man himself we would say, be patient under the trial, knowing that merit always outlives calumny, and strive by cultivating the highest motives to live above unjust censure.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF DR. JAMES GREGORY.

Dr. James Gregory, Professor of the Practice of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and eldest son of Dr. John Gregory, the author of 'Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician', was born at Aberdeen in the year 1753, and there received the rudiments of his education. He accompanied his father to Edinburgh in 1764, and after going through the usual course of literary studies at Edinburgh, was for a short time a student at Christ Church, Oxford, of which his relation Dr. David Gregory had been dean. It was there, probably, that he acquired that taste for classical learning, and that admiration for the character of an accomplished classical scholar, which ever afterwards distinguished him. He entered early on the study of medicine at Edinburgh, and was a student in that faculty at the time of his father's sudden death in February 1773. The extraordinary exertions which he then made to complete his father's course of lectures, was regarded by many of his friends as sufficient indication of his ability to continue and extend the hereditary reputation of his family. He took the degree of doctor of physic at Edinburgh in 1774, and spent the greater part of the next two years in Holland, France, and Italy. After the death of Dr. John Gregory the chair of the Institutes of Medicine, (then finally separated from that of the Practice of Medicine, of which

Dr. Cullen remained professor) was offered to Dr. Drummond, who was at that time abroad, and who ultimately declined accepting it. For two winters the class was taught by Dr. Duncan, whose appointment, however, was only temporary. In 1776 the chair was again declared vacant, and on the 1st of August of that year Dr. Gregory was appointed professor. He began to lecture on the *Institutes* the next winter session, and in the succeeding year he commenced also the duty of teacher of Clinical Medicine in the Royal Infirmary, and continued to deliver, at least, one course of clinical lectures annually for more than twenty years. From the time of commencing his duties as professor, Dr. Gregory was continually engaged in medical practice, but his practice amongst the higher ranks of society was not extensive until many of his pupils had been settled in business, and were desirous of availing themselves of his assistance. For the last twenty-five years of his life he was much engaged in consulting practice, and for the last ten he was decidedly at the head of his profession in Scotland. In 1778 he published his '*Conspectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ*,' as a text-book for his lectures on the *Institutes*. This work passed through several editions, both during his lifetime and since his death, and has been very generally admired, partly on account of the accurate view which it affords of the state of medical science at the period when it was composed, and partly for the ease, elegance, and perspicuity of its Latinity. On the illness of Dr. Cullen in 1796, he was appointed joint professor of the practice of medicine; he became sole professor on the death of Dr. Cullen, in the same year, and continued to deliver lectures on that subject to audiences almost regularly increasing, until his last illness in 1821. He died on the 2d of April in that year.

As a practitioner and teacher of medicine, it may be stated that Dr. Gregory was chiefly distinguished by his

clear perception, and constant application of the truth contained in the maxim which he was accustomed to quote from a favorite Greek author : "The best physician is he who can distinguish what he can do from what he cannot do." He distrusted all theories in regard to the intimate nature of diseased actions, as premature and visionary ; but he had early and carefully studied the diagnostic and prognostic symptoms, and the various forms of the most important diseases, and the agency of the most powerful remedies ; and, without entering into the minutiae of morbid anatomy, he had a clear understanding of the changes of structure to be apprehended from disease in the different internal parts of the body. On these points, and their immediate practical bearing, he fixed all his attention. When he thought that these changes were approaching, and could be arrested by active treatment, he urged the truly effectual remedies, with the peculiar energy of his character, restrained only by his strong good sense and ample experience, and despising all parade of nicety or variety of prescription. When he was satisfied that the nature or stage of the disease did not admit of effectual cure, his decision of character was equally shown in abstaining from useless interference, and confining his views to the relief of suffering.

As a teacher, he was always strongly impressed with the duty of fixing the attention of his pupils on those points in the history of disease, and in the application of remedies, the knowledge of which he had found by experience to be most practically important, and the ignorance of which he thought practically dangerous. The characteristic symptoms and varieties of inflammatory diseases, and the extent to which the antiphlogistic treatment might be carried in opposing them, were therefore subjects on which he dwelt with peculiar earnestness ; and in regard to the use of those remedies in such diseases, he had acquired, by long and keen observation, a *tact* and decision which probably never

were surpassed. On the other hand, in regard to those numerous chronic diseases where remedies are so frequently ineffectual, he was equally zealous in inculcating those means of prevention which he thought most effectual and most attainable ; and whilst he was incredulous as to the alleged virtue of most medicines in such diseases, he omitted no opportunity of illustrating the efficacy of temperance, even of bodily abstinence, without fatigue, and mental occupation without anxiety, in averting their approach, or even arresting their progress. From these great practical objects of his labours as a teacher, no consideration ever turned him aside. His extensive reading, particularly of the older authors, never led to pedantic displays of learning ; his logical acuteness never beguiled him into useless controversies ; his fertility of imagination never carried him beyond the simplest and most practical views of the subjects of which he treated.

As a lecturer he possessed the great advantages of a command of language, which made him almost independent of any written notes, and of a tenacity of memory, which enabled him to detail cases in illustration of his principles year after year, from the whole range of his experience, merely from having the names of the patients before him, without the slightest inaccuracy or omission. The commanding energy and quickness of intellect which his lectures displayed, the frank and fearless exposition of his opinions which they contained, the classical allusions with which they abounded, and the genuine humour by which they were often enlivened, rendered them peculiarly attractive and interesting, and acquired for him a remarkable ascendancy over the minds of his pupils. In the practice of his profession he was remarkable for the frankness and candour of his communications with the relations and friends of the sick, and for the zealous and even tender interest, always increasing with the difficulty and danger

of the case, which he took in his patients. This made the more impression, as it contrasted with a certain roughness of external manner, and a constitutional hilarity and whimsical humour, which, on some occasions, made him “not hesitate between his friend and his joke.”

His conduct with his professional brethren in consultation was eminently distinguished by candour and liberality, and the total absence of all professional trick. He never attempted to make himself of importance, but was ever ready to give the strongest commendation to the treatment previously pursued, when he thought it judicious; always laying stress on the great and essential points of practice, and never giving an undue importance to favorite nostrums or remedies of a secondary or frivolous kind. Thus the young practitioner who was attentive to his duties and honorable in his conduct, always found in him a zealous friend; those only had to dread coming into collision with him, who were wanting in professional zeal or professional integrity. Dr. Gregory's more intimate friends and connexions were strongly attached to him, on account of the warmth and steadiness of his attachments, of a generosity of disposition bordering on profusion, and of a high and somewhat aristocratic sense of honour, which made him instinctively shrink from any proceeding liable to the slightest imputation of meanness, selfishness, or duplicity.

He had an utter detestation of all those professional arts by which the favour of the public is sometimes too successfully propitiated; and this was the true origin of various controversies in which he was at different times engaged with his professional brethren, and to which his strong sense of humour, his fondness for logical disputation, and a somewhat irascible temper, led him to devote more of his time and attention than their importance deserved.

No medical teacher or practitioner of eminence was ever more ready to acknowledge the imperfection of his art, more distrustful of medical theories, or even of the alleged results of medical practice, when not in accordance with his own experience, or more careless of posthumous reputation. But none was ever more solicitous to give, both to his pupils and his patients, the full benefit of those principles of medical science, of the truth and importance of which he himself was convinced; and on this account his professional character had assumed, long before his death, a superiority over most of his contemporaries, of which those who judge of it only from his own contributions to medical science or literature cannot form an adequate conception.*

* From the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

“TO THE VENERABLE THE POSTMASTER IN THE KINGDOM
OF THE DEAD.*

“How difficult it must be, notwithstanding the most exemplary official arrangements, to forward letters to their right address, when the Christian name is not written at length, and the year of death also given, is a fact of which I am fully aware, since one cannot reasonably expect the postmen in your department should be more accurate or more fertile in conjecture than that scrupulously careful man of letters on earth, who confounded Dr. John Gregory the author of ‘Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician,’ who died in 1773, with Dr. James Gregory the author of the ‘*Conspectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ*.’ I take the liberty, therefore, respectfully to mention that I mean the latter only; he will be the more easily identified when I add that he, as long as he lived in Edinburgh, was not only mentally but physically *a great man*; and that, in the year 1794, in the general burst of loyalty which distinguished that time, he assumed the musket of a common grenadier.

“I have the honour to be, &c.”

* See Lucan’s Dialogues.—ED.

LETTER TO DR. JAMES GREGORY.

“You have, doubtless, never regretted that you yourself laboured so hard in Aberdeen, Oxford, and Edinburgh, to acquire a classical education. In all such fundamental attempts the roots are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.

“It is only when it is presented in a perfect form that an able opinion gives satisfaction, and outlasts its own time. Your elegant Latin did not less contribute to your fame, and if your name is still remembered, it is chiefly as the name of one who was a model of excellence in that respect.

“It is justly said that style is the man, and as a noble form indicates a noble mind, so a finished mode of expression leads us to anticipate the results of thought and study.

“As in your time a medical author who wrote with ease, and so as to be intelligible and attractive to the non-medical, was exceedingly scarce, so is it no less the case in our time; and it is on this account that I have undertaken to lay before you my complaint by letter, in the hope of obtaining from you some consolation.

“At the temple of the Delphic Apollo stood, as you well know, this inscription in golden letters,—‘Know thyself,’ a plain intimation to the votaries that the true Pythia dwelt within them. Inquiries of this household oracle are, however, more rare than ever; men, in general, come too seldom to inquire of themselves, and youth especially, between dissipation and varieties of study, scarcely attain to any self-intercourse.

“The requirements of science are too many; the requirements for its thorough mastery and the elegance of its garb too few. A certain *quantum* of knowledge is

exacted, its *quality* is left free. The machine goes on very regularly ; the schools send forth, from their examinations, finished youths, and the university, their *doctores medicinæ rite promotus*, that is, complete masters of their profession.

“ Every one runs towards his end, and every one is glad to get ahead of other runners ; meanwhile the pressure of the mass becomes greater, and the difficulty of attracting attention is, to each individual, proportionally increased. Population grows and, through the greater facilities of communication, boundaries approach each other ; one discovery presses on the heels of another, and the steam-press scatters, like a volcano, a ceaseless stream of excitement in all directions.

“ He who keeps himself on the stretch has enough to do ; care for his own existence leaves no sacrifice for anything else.

“ In ordinary life this may be rightly arranged, but how in science, and especially in medical science ?

“ Should not the physician, who has exclusively to deal with the individual, concentrate the whole force of his intellect and talents upon the Individual ? To his knowledge and character the problem appears given, not only in the circle of eternal change to detect the quiet spirit, but also to remain himself calm, and labour after perfection in the individual.

“ Medicine extends itself into the boundless ; and in proportion as journeys into new parts of the world enlarge the *materia medica*, as chemistry supplies the laboratory with new methods, and the microscope can exhibit for physiology and pathology the smallest objects, the physician must strive after the concentration and perfection of each individual subject.

“ The school has to make a beginning for this purpose ;

the ideal of duty can only arise from the satisfaction of daily duty, out of the necessity of an equal cultivation in the Real and Formal.

“Who can bear a clearer testimony than yourself to the necessity and the reward of private industry in the study of the great masters, and the attempt to develop right conceptions clearly and simply?”

“The Dutch Hippocrates, whom one cannot certainly reproach with partiality to a regular education, was, in a great part, self-educated; his teachers were especially the ancients, and his wonderful influence on his generation and on posterity was attained principally through the weight of a polite and liberal education. When, therefore, the scholar invokes *panem et circenses*, and desires there should be given him only what is indispensable to subsistence, and all as light as child’s play, there is no scope left to the well-qualified teacher.

“There is no reason to fear that the study of medicine will become a *torus medicatus*, or even Graham’s celestial bed; yet it is made too easy by the aid of manuals of therapeutics, which resemble a chrestomathy* or anthology, alphabetical encyclopædias, and works on physiology, surgery, practical medicine, illustrated like children’s books with pictures. The only parts of a man’s head which are brought into practice are his eyes, and where a picture can represent an object no thought is required.

“At no time has so much labour been bestowed upon the outside, that superficial organ, and with so much satisfaction, as at the present. But if the question is about the exterior, and the skin, and the raiment, we may also think

* It is called in the *Commentariolus de Vitae cursu propria Boerhaavii manu conscriptus* (in Burton’s ‘Life of Hermann Boerhaave,’ London, 1746, p. 207): “Est forsitan incredibile nullum a nostro medicinae auditum professorem, nisi cl. Drelincurtium paucis vicibus paulo ante fata.”

of the old fables, and remember, that in the expedition to conquer the golden fleece, miracles assisted, whilst even the mast of the Argo prophesied, and that by the garment of Dejanira Hercules was ruined.

“True learning is becoming scarcer than ever amongst physicians,* but, since it bestows a certain dignity, we meet repeatedly with the pretence of learning, a playing the gallant with Hippocrates, and the ostentation of blindly picked up notes.† ‡

“Grammar, as you well know, produces at school so much weariness, that the emancipated student seeks to get free from it; and hence it occurs that in writing or speaking the Latin tongue, forgetfulness in this respect remarkably shows itself. As children manufacture for themselves peculiar words and phrases, and thus construct a kind of dialect of their own, so might one with the aid of a quick ear, collect materials for an anti-grammar during the defence of a thesis.

“Truly, exceptions are easy to the student of medicine,

* Short and pointedly speaks thereon S. C. Lucae: “Cur nostris temporibus multo parcius quam olim inter medicos juniores reperiantur docti literisque satis imbuti?” Marburgi, 1820. 4, § III, p. 7.

† The critic will exclaim at the sight of them, like Aristophanes, (*‘The Clouds,’* v. 900):

“Weh! da da kommt er heran,
Der veraltete Dreck! Mir den Speinapf her.”

“Alas! there, there it approaches!
The antiquated filth—bring hither the vomit bowl to me.”

‡ [“And laugh’d to hear an idiot quote
A verse from Horace learn’d by rote.”—SWIFT.

“He was seldom tempted to ornament his discourse with scraps and patches from the learned languages, regarding that art as very poor, in which any person may become an adept by devoting a week to the study of the ‘Dictionary of Quotations.’”—Dr. Olinthus Gregory’s *‘Life of Dr. Mason Good,’* p. 90. (*Note of Translator.*)]

since his doings and practices constantly point out exceptions to the Rule.

“The acquirement of foreign languages has become, through the frequency of travelling, indispensable for intercourse, and, therefore, a part of education.

“Many, however, who know the English key, know nothing of the *Clavis Ciceroniana*; instead of *philosophical transactions* one wrote, indeed, *philosophical insects*, and Möhre* instead of Moira. That eternal order of things, which rigorously and justly decrees to every act its reward, to every crime its punishment, is unfamiliar to him in such a description.

“The classics are frequently taken up at universities, that they, like prize medals, may be reserved for the last effort. In the hour of need, they exclaim *Surgite Triarii!* and in the struggle of despair they become antiquaries. Besides, classical learning is as little inconsistent with practical skill as courage with beauty.

“Who could better tell than you, that just such medical men as have not placed the classics in an index prohibitorium, have especially distinguished themselves by penetrating judgment and upright conduct? It is but lately that I discovered that George Baker, that benefactor of Devonshire, who first traced the colic and palsy prevalent in that county to the lead used in the cider casks, was an accomplished Latin scholar.

“Many medical men show a remarkable innocence of literature. They cite an oft-reprinted author, without any further remark, from merely the edition which is at their command. They are acquainted with the *fontanelle*, but not with *Fontenelle*. Of another *Hamann* besides him who was hanged they have never heard, and if *Lichtenberg* is spoken of, they hit upon the hermit of that name whose horoscope is found in the writings of Paracelsus.

* Möhre, in German, signifies carrot.

“The art of drawing, on the contrary, is not despised. Many a one knows more of the *painter's school* than the *painter's colic*. He who has no collection of the portraits of physicians, because, indeed, often nothing but their wigs or their orders have been found or come to hand, possesses, perhaps, pretty pictures of medical subjects, as *l'Amour Médecin*, or the Water Doctor of Dow.

“In such matters, it would be wrong to desire too much. The artist has to study antiques, whereof much is wanting ; the medical man to study patients, of whom he often has not any. Other models of deformities than wax models might give his fancy a wrong direction. A useful practitioner should be acquainted with the difference between all the various membranes, whether he has ever seen those which Eumenes found at Pergamos, *parchment* (*membrana pergamena*), or any other than his Doctor's diploma, is a matter of indifference. He prescribes not Attic salt but English.

“He who feels himself wearied with the heat of the day, does not forthwith feel disposed, as did Dr. Arbuthnot, in conjunction with Swift and Pope, to write a *Martin Scriblerus* in defence of the *Belles Lettres*, but a romance from the circulating library would not be despised. It is, however, worth inquiry, whether some of the greatest characters have not been indebted for their finest impulses to this sort of reading.

“To the cultivation of the poetic faculty the manifold empirical divisions of knowledge have not been favorable. Nietzsche actually places in his *Pathology* the *furor poeticus* between the *chorca Stⁱ. Viti* and *furor uterinus*. What wonder, when even ancient physicians had a taste for the Alexandrian grapes without stones, but not for Alexandrian verses.

“There have been, indeed, amongst the medical body poets of some celebrity ; such were Nicander of Colophon,

Serenus Samonicus, Aegidius, Hier, Fracastorius,* George Gottlob Richter, Haller, Werlhof; also such who laboured hard for poets, as Samuel Garth, who gave to Dryden a becoming funeral, and Currie, who published a life of Burns, but with the best will, the Gradus ad Parnassum leads not to Parnassus, and however a lame Tyrtæus might fire the Spartans, a physician can cure no cripples by his song.

“There remains to me then, to my own consolation, only one complaint, namely, that many physicians write so carelessly, that with regard to their style one might bring an *actio injuriarum* against them. It is enough to make one go beside himself, or, as the German adage has it, *go out of one’s skin* with impatience and vexation; were it not, as Apollo taught Marsyas, that even a stronger cut than this is necessary to penetrate the nerves of their skin.

“It cannot have escaped you that he who may have cultivated the *processum styloideum*, and been a good anatomist, may yet have the most uncultivated style, and may, on that very account, as example shows, be esteemed as a highly estimable practical writer. Against this, however, both sacred and profane writers have protested. The Gospel of Luke is written† in purer Greek than any of the Gospels, and the Apostle was a physician.

“Men like Celsus, Fernelius, Sydenham, Baglivi, Gaub, Triller, who bestowed so much care on their diction, cannot well be reproached with being mere verbalists.

“As cream proves the goodness of the milk, so the situa-

* Of whose verses says Th. Bartholinus (*de Medici Poeti*, Copenhagen, 1669), “*cum veterum majestate certare valent.*”

† Therefore Du Val says of him (*Pictura linearis sanctorum Medicorum*, Parisiis, 1643, iv, p. 4): “*Divus Lucas scripsit Evangelium ornatissimo sermone, styloque elegantiori, in gratiam Graecorum, qui sermonis venustate ac politiore literatura delectabantur.*”

bility and grace of the expression shows the excellence of the author. There is, indeed, no universal type, since, according to the spirit of the times, if repose or elevation of genius prevail, soon fulness of thought, boldness of expression, wit and humour, are most valued ; again, if the importance of the interests at stake directs the attention to economy of time—conciseness, richness in useful notes, methodical clearness, obtain most approbation. The noble and harmonious are, however, never slighted.

“Let us confess the fact, the wooden tablets coated with wax, which the ancients used in writing, have become through the medium of the invention of printing by Guttenberg, the tablets of the law to mankind. In the brain is a feather, and indeed a pen,* (*calamus scriptorius* s. *sinus rhomboideus* at the extreme boundary,) but the pen is now the feather in that wing which moves the world.

“In comparison with this, writing is now uncommonly easy and harmless. By means of the pen machine, the pen lies ready before us, in the use of steel pens there is nothing to be feared from any fragment of the quill flying into one’s eyes, and, by the consequence of smooth and glossy paper, the labour of the hand, if not of the head, is much lightened. Medical writers can now devote all the more time to the construction of their periods, since periodical diseases are cured by quinine.

“Under these circumstances, the plan presents itself that you should take the presidency of a medical society for practice in composition. Prize themes should be given from time to time, which might be drawn from the superfluous time of physicians during the first five years of their practice.

* Compare my writings: *De Herophili celeberrimi medici vita scriptis atque in medicina meritis*. Gottingae, 1840, iv, pp. 29, 30.

“If you agree to this, will you have the goodness to choose the most suitable out of the following subjects, and to arrange the time for receiving candidates :

1. On the superfluity of technical terms. A Sermon.
2. On excusable lies to patients. A Narrative.
3. On the advantage of tying together broken threads. An Ode.
4. On disputes after the death of a patient. A Catechetical Attempt.
5. On the favorite recreations of medical men. A Dream.
6. On constant peace in and after a consultation. A Table Talk.
7. On the friendship of physicians. A Mythe.
8. On the publication of doubtful cases. A Medico-Legal Inquiry.
9. On the theatrical acting of the sick. A Hymn.
10. On the physiognomy of those about the sick. A Description from Nature.
11. On the egotism of the sick. A Satire.
12. On the cynicism of physicians. An Elegy.
13. On medical undeceiving. A Fairy Tale.
14. On the complaints of medical men having no Sunday. A Farce.
15. On the unexpected meeting of two physicians at a sick bed.
A Psychological Prize.
16. On schemes to become a family physician. An Heroic Poem.
17. On the alternate inspection of colleges. A Novel.
18. On the inconvenience of having neither patients nor friends.
A Ballad.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO DR. JAMES GREGORY.

A letter to the learned Edinburgh Professor, and the elegant author of the ‘*Conspectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ*,’ very fitly treats of the kindred topics of medical education and medical literature. The first of these is a topic of great and ever increasing importance, but at the same time one which it is utterly hopeless to attempt to discuss fully in these pages. Nearly all we can do is to follow our author from paragraph to paragraph with such illustrations

of his pithy and pregnant remarks, as we may be able to furnish.

As the views of Professor Marx on the subject of medical education—its superficiality—the over-crowding of the mind with studies—and the corresponding want of true mental discipline, may be reasonably supposed to be at least partly drawn from his experience of the working of systems of education in Germany, it is worth while, before proceeding further, to look a little at the nature of that system, as developed in the German universities. The following details are taken from the report of Dr. Hoefer, a French physician, who was officially employed to obtain information relative to the teaching and practice in the principal states of Germany. The account has reference to the University of Berlin, which is stated to be the most complete of the German universities, and a sort of model for those of the secondary states. In this university there are fourteen chairs, occupied by fourteen titular professors.

1. General anatomy, and anatomy of the sensitive apparatus. 2. Descriptive anatomy. 3. Medical pathology and clinique. 4. General physiology. 5. Comparative physiology and micrography. 6. Botany and pharmacy. 7. General pathology and materia medica. 8. General and special surgery. 9. Clinical surgery. 10. Midwifery. 11. Legal medicine. 12. Sanitary police, public hygiene. 13. History of medicine, encyclopedy, and methodology. 14. Syphilitic diseases, special therapeutics of acute and chronic diseases. These professors are assisted by eleven extraordinary and thirteen private professors.

No student is allowed to matriculate as a member of any of the faculties of Prussia, unless he present a certificate showing that he has finished his classical studies in a college (*gymnasium*), and has passed the (*arbiturienten examen*) (*examen arbiturorum in universitatem*). This is

the classical degree or degree in arts. On matriculating the student receives a card, on which is printed a list of all the lectures he is expected to follow during the course of his studies. Each course lasts six months, and costs the student ten thalers, about £1 12s. The entire medical curriculum exacted for the degree of doctor occupies four years, and is called the *quadriennen academicum*. The lectures are delivered three times a week by the professors, and each course lasts six months. The students are under no restrictions as to the order in which they attend these lectures, and have no medical examinations to undergo until they arrive at the termination of their studies. The result of so defective an organization is, that during the first two or three years of their university residence they do little or nothing, devoting their time to amusement and idleness. During the last year they in vain attempt to recover their lost time, and are obliged to resort to a wholesale system of grinding, in order to be ready to pass the final examination. "Out of a hundred pupils," says Dr. Hoefer, "there are not five who seriously employ the entire period allotted to study."*

Here we may well trace the origin of the superficiality of which Professor Marx complains; knowledge acquired in this way, must necessarily be superficial and ill-digested. Far more valuable, as well as honorable, are the results of hard study of the self-educated under every possible disadvantage; such as they were exhibited in the case of the late Dr. James Johnson, who, after reading indefatigably on board the *Mercury*, of which he was surgeon's mate, and seizing every opportunity, when the ship was in harbour, to visit the naval hospitals, and watch the cases they contained, actually saved from his pay, and expended all he possessed in completing his professional education. "The Sybaritic student of the present day," says a writer in the '*Lancet*,' "propped up on all sides by

* *Lancet*, 1844.

prosectors and by lecturers—provided with means, and glutted with help—who flies in despair at the difficulties that overwhelm him to the friendly arms of the *grinder*, may blush, perhaps, to read how Mr. Johnson struggled to obtain an education, unsupported by money, unassisted by friends, unaided by those manuals, plates, and woodcuts which, professing to facilitate, appear to supersede exertion, and form at once the refuge and the ruin of complaining indolence.”

If it were even possible to acquire in one year the knowledge which ought to have been acquired in four, it is not possible to acquire with it the vigour and discipline of mind, the habits of attention, analysis, and discrimination, which can alone result from the patient gradual subjugation of difficulties.

But to return to our German neighbours.

“During the first year, what little time they give to science, is generally devoted to the lectures on natural philosophy, chemistry, botany, mineralogy, zoology, logic, and psychology. These sciences constitute the *absolutorium philosophicum*, or the reunion of the preparatory sciences, on which an examination has to be undergone at the Faculty of Philosophy, before the doctor’s degree can be obtained. The dean of the Faculty of Medicine is obliged to be present at this examination. The expense of the examination is ten thalers.

“The second and third years are, or ought to be, devoted to anatomical studies, to physiology, pathological anatomy, external and internal pathology, legal medicine, toxicology, and the history of medicine. The fourth or last year is employed in the study of midwifery, and of external and internal clinical medicine in the hospitals; it is the period allotted to the practical examination of disease.

“During the first three months of their university studies (this respects the clinical studies) the pupils only

follow the visits of the physician or surgeon, listening to his examinations of the patients and to his lectures, they are then called *auscultantes*. In the second *trimestre* they become *practicantes*, that is, they themselves have patients to see and examine. The '*practicans*' is obliged to visit his patient every morning, often twice a day; moreover he has to draw up the history of the case intrusted to him, and to submit it to the clinical professor.

"To graduate as doctor, at the end of the four years, the student has to produce, first, a certificate from the Faculty of Philosophy, of having passed the *tentamen philosophicum*; the examination in logic, and the accessory sciences to which we have alluded. Secondly, a certificate of having devoted four years to medical studies. The examination for the degree is a mere formality; it consists of a written and an oral trial. The candidate composes a Latin dissertation, or thesis on a subject chosen by himself, or by the dean, which he supports publicly. Having fulfilled these conditions, he is saluted by the title of "*doctor medicinæ rite promotus*."

We shall now proceed to look a little at Dr. Marx's observations; he complains that "men, in general, too seldom inquire of themselves, and that youth, in particular between dissipation and varieties of study, scarcely attain to any self-intercourse." In connexion with this complaint the following judicious remarks of Dr. Graves, in his introductory lecture at the session 1837-8, may be advantageously taken into consideration.

"I think students are very much misled, as to the best mode of becoming good practitioners. This is an age of ambitious acquirement, and professional men seem to be ashamed unless they have the character of universal knowledge. Everybody studies everything, and the consequence is that few know anything well. We live amidst the din of declamations in favour of general education; and are

everywhere assailed by the ceaseless competition of those who vend cheap knowledge in the form of penny periodicals, lectures innumerable, and hosts of rival encyclopædias; but ours is not an age of calm unpretending acquirement and secure precise study, without which the effort to become good physicians and surgeons must prove vain and fruitless. Can anything be more embarrassing than the multitudinous array of studies presented to the young student, who comes to London or Dublin with the view of educating himself as a general practitioner? So many departments of knowledge are spread before him, and so numerous are the exhortations to study each with particular care that he feels at a loss where to begin. The merits, advantages, and necessity of his own branch are insisted on by the respective teachers with all the force of impressive eloquence; and, after running the round of introductory lectures (an initiatory penance duly performed by all beginners), he returns in the evening to his home puzzled and dispirited. He finds that it will be necessary for him to become an excellent botanist, an able and scientific chemist, and a profound anatomist; that he must have some knowledge of zoology, be well versed in comparative anatomy, know how to detect poisons with accuracy, and study the legislative enactments which bear on questions of medical jurisprudence. Physiology, materia medica, therapeutics, nosology, morbid anatomy, the principles and practice of surgery, medicine, and midwifery, claim all and each his especial attention; nay, many teachers insist upon the necessity of becoming master of several languages,—Greek, Latin, French, and German; while others assure him that he never can prosecute scientific medicine with success, unless he studies physics as well as physic; some there are even who encourage him to cultivate mineralogy and geology, as if, forsooth, a knowledge of these sciences could teach the laws that regulate dis-

eased action, or the indications which should govern the exhibition of remedies.”

It is a fact not sufficiently considered, that education is of two kinds. There is the education of the mind, that training and culture of the mental faculties, of the judgment, the reasoning powers, the taste and appreciation of those subjects which shall afterwards be presented to it, which fits the mind for the purposes to which it is destined; and there is that special education of the mind thus fitted, for that particular employment in which it is henceforth to be engaged. The former of these departments of education is by far the most important, and it is precisely that in which, in the opinions of able judges, amongst whom we may evidently rank Professor Marx, our present systems of medical education are most deficient. In proof of its importance, we shall cite a judge no less competent than the late Dr. Arnold, who, in a lecture on the Divisions and Mutual Relations of Knowledge, observes, “The human mind may fitly be called that great and universal machine, by which we operate upon all things. We all know the fame which was so deservedly obtained by the late Mr. James Watt, for his great improvements in the steam-engine. The value of the steam-engine consists not only in the magnitude of its powers, but in the generality of their application. It is useful not for one purpose only, but for hundreds. How different are the callings of the cotton manufacturer, the brewer, and the packet-master, or coach proprietor! yet steam serves the purposes of them all. Now if the steam-engine be so general an instrument, the human mind is yet more so. Nothing absolutely can be done without it, and who can set bounds to what may be done with it? In improving then this universal engine, we are conferring a service on mankind, something the same in kind with the improvement of the steam-engine, but in degree and extent of usefulness beyond all comparison greater.” If this be

important with regard to mind in general, how much more so with regard to minds which are to be exercised upon a profession like medicine. "No profession," says Dr. Latham, "requires a sounder preliminary education than ours, and in none ought education to be more studiously directed to promote the activity and development of the mental powers." If this first part of education, the education of the mind, be duly conducted, and successfully effected, the student may be trusted to acquire for himself much which without this must be forced upon him by external necessity, and at last but superficially acquired. If the steam-engine, to use Arnold's expressive simile, be fitly constructed and thoroughly efficient, we have but to set it to work, and it will work cheerfully, untiringly, and correctly; but if its parts be imperfect and unscientifically arranged, urge it as you may, you will obtain but bungling performances. It is then, we repeat, the *mind* which should be the first object of attention in the education of youth, not the mere acquisition of knowledge, but the cultivation of that instrument by which knowledge is acquired, and by which also that knowledge is alone capable of being rightly wielded. "Il ne s'agit pas," says Montesquieu, "autant de faire lire que de faire penser," and it follows that wherever there is an excessive pressure of study and reading, so as to absorb all the time, exhaust the mind, and prevent the free exercise of thought, making what we read our own, the true business of education is impeded. In after life we may much more easily acquire the *knowledge*—the *facts*—than we can acquire the habit of truly appreciating them.

Professor Marx, in some succeeding paragraphs, touches on the continual effort needed to enable the practitioner to keep up the progress of medical knowledge, and here we may cite a passage to the same effect from Dr. Simon. "If the masters of the science," says he, "have imposed on

themselves the yoke of a severe intellectual discipline, how much more is it the duty of medical men of an inferior order to consecrate to study, to a sort of rumination on the results of experience, such leisure as the business of actual practice allows them. He has but little understood the difficulties of the science, or the weight of the moral responsibility which he assumes towards society, who does not reserve a part of his time—that stuff of which life is made, according to Franklin, for the solitary labour of the closet.” This passage, though it may seem a digression from the subject of education, serves, in fact, to strengthen the argument for the necessity of *mental* training in early life.

The letter contains many remarks on the neglect of classical studies in medical education, and from this it would appear that the certificate required from students at their matriculation, as mentioned in the account of the German universities, does not avail to secure the proposed result.

It is because persons have too much confined their attention to the *second* department in education (the acquirement of the special knowledge required for actual use), that classical studies have been unduly depreciated in the education of medical men. They are not truly medical studies, but they educate the mind and prepare it for medical studies, and they have a counteracting influence to that purely material atmosphere, with which the absorption in physical science envelopes the mind of the medical student. On this subject, Dr. Simon says, “The law which imposes on the medical student the obligation of deep and extensive literary studies cannot be too strict. Not only does the necessity of such a preparation arise out of the very difficulties of a science, to the study of which one cannot bring a mind too well cultivated, but in sowing in the soul the germs of noble and elevated ideas, literature forearms

the young medical man against the dangerous influence which his subsequent studies will exercise over him." Thus Arnold says, "that physical science might be more safely studied at Oxford than anywhere else, because all the influences of the place are against it." Dr. Simon continues, "The academies which the law has invested with the right of conferring the double degree, which constitutes the legal qualification for the study of medicine, do not, in general, perceive the importance of these preliminary studies to the medical man, and are apt to regard the requirements of the law in this respect as merely an impediment, intended to prevent the dangers of a competition as fatal to the individual as to society. This mistake arises, partly from the prejudice which men of letters of every degree nourish, as a sort of classical tradition, against medicine. In their view, medicine is not a science, it is something which is akin to divination and to empiricism, and which may be practised by any biped in possession of his five senses. The advocate, indeed, cannot have his mind too much cultivated, he constantly requires all the resources of the most acute dialectics, the most seducing eloquence, were it only to show that language is given to man to conceal his thoughts. But as to the physician, why need he prepare his understanding by a training so laborious? What is the science but a simple spelling over the organs, or, at most, some information and experience on the virtue of natural agents?"

"Hence, notwithstanding the severity which the examiners show towards the candidates in medicine, one may always detect this prejudice, worthy of another age. When a candidate has declared his intention to study this latter science" (this, of course, relates to examinations previous to matriculation), "literature, properly so called, history, and philosophy, are quickly disposed of, and all the heat of the conflict is concentrated on the physical sciences,

which subsequently will call forth a still more rigorous trial. It is right, no doubt, to require much as regards these sciences, but wrong to relax on the other particulars of the programme. *For literature and philosophy can alone sufficiently prepare the understanding and heart of man, for the study of a science so difficult and perilous as medicine.*"

In respect of the second department of education, the special studies requisite for the medical profession, we can say but little; the subject would require a volume to discuss, and is, besides, beyond our plan. The course of study in the German universities is very comprehensive, and it does not appear that anything could be added to its extent; but its thorough effectiveness seems, as in our British schools of medicine, to be impeded by a want of control over the conduct and occupations of the students. With regard to our own schools, the collegiate system now adopted in some of them, may go far to remove the evil, but even that does not embrace all that might be done. Instead of one examination at the close of the period of study, would it not be desirable to have a yearly examination on those subjects which have formed the course of the previous sessions? This examination, being confined to a narrower range of topics, might be much more minute and thorough than it can be now, when it has to embrace the studies of three or four years. Sir Benjamin Brodie has pointed out a common evil, which our present system of examinations, if it has not engendered, is at least calculated to keep up. "It is not uncommon," he says, in his first lecture on Pathology and Surgery, "for medical students, any more than it is for other students, to engage at first with zeal in their pursuits; then as these lose the charm of novelty, to become careless and indifferent, and, at last, when their education is drawing to a close, and it becomes a question how far they are qualified to

undergo the required examinations, to endeavour to make up for the time which has been misspent and wasted by excessive labour, such as is incompatible with sufficient physical repose and mental relaxation. But it is not," he adds, "in this way that great things are to be accomplished, either in our profession or in any other. Habits of attention, when once lost, are not easily regained; and *no durable impressions are made upon a mind which is exercised beyond its powers.*" A sentiment this which, if duly weighed and appreciated, would put an end to the cramming and grinding practices, as little adapted to promote healthy mental cultivation as the excessive feeding of the Strasbourg goose is to promote healthy digestion.

From medical education the transition is easy to medical literature. Indeed, as it is with regard to the scarcity of writings intelligible and attractive to the non-medical that our author lays his complaint before Dr. Gregory, this would seem to be the principal topic of the letter, medical education being regarded chiefly as bearing upon it.

"True learning," Professor Marx says, "becomes more and more scarce among physicians." We find, indeed, that in former days they were distinguished for their scholarship. Linacre was the first English physician who read Galen and Aristotle in the original Greek; and Dr. Caius, the founder of Caius College, Cambridge, read lectures in Greek in the University of Padua. Sydenham and many others were remarkable for their learning; but it must be remembered that there was a time when all elegant and polite literature was, with very few exceptions, concentrated in the Greek and Latin languages, and that a deficient acquaintance with them by no means carries with it the same barrenness of mind, the same absence of lettered refinement, since the growth of a complete literature in the modern European languages.

We have had two recent and remarkable instances of

eminent men, each at the head of his department in the profession, the one an accomplished classical scholar, the other destitute of any but the ordinary scholastic attainments, we allude to Sir Henry Hallford and Sir Astley Cooper. Sir Henry, it is well known, was wont to beguile the tedium of his long professional rides by turning choice passages of the English poets into Latin verse—compositions which he styled *Nugæ Metricæ*. Sir Astley, meanwhile, had but an ordinary knowledge of Latin, and none at all of Greek. Of these two men it is probable that the great surgeon will live the longest in the memory of posterity.

Professor Marx (and who has a better right to do so) alludes frequently to the advantages of a correct and elegant style. “As a noble form indicates a noble mind,” &c. &c.; and again: “It is only when presented in a perfect form that an able opinion,” &c. The physical sciences generally, and still more the science of medicine, have sometimes been deemed unsusceptible of aid from the graces of style, but, as Simon observes, “we cannot assent to this exclusion” (of medical science) “from the domain of literature.” “Percy,” says Pariset in his *Eloge*, when speaking of his devotion to Horace and Virgil, “was struck with the talent of these great writers, and under their auspices he cultivated the art of writing. When very young, he felt that it is this art which stamps its value on every other, and that it is especially *needful to the sciences*; for if science gives ideas, it does not always give the order which is their soul and their bond; this order is fixed by the art of thinking, and what is the art of thinking when manifested by signs, but the art of speaking and writing? There is nothing, then, well thought out, but what is well written, and the converse; and hence we may see what we ought to think of the contempt which is sometimes affected for an art so indispensable to the progress and even the preservation of human society.”

“As the medical sciences,” (we quote Simon,) “have for their essential object the laying the foundation of an art which has to do with one of the most important interests of man, it is necessary that its truths should be translated into a language which reproduces in its severity, but also in its flexibility, its fertility, and its energy, the various attributes of pathological life. It is only thus that medicine becomes a science really transmissible.”

We confess that we feel a little inclined to add a postscript to the letter now before us, lest the departed Scotch Professor should be led to entertain a view too discouraging of the state of our medical literature. Dr. Simon enters a protest against any such ideas with regard to his country, and says, that were it not for the fear of wounding the modesty of the living, he could easily demonstrate that “*la science médicale se pique encore quelquefois de savoir parler François.*” With the writings of a Watson, a Brodie, a Conolly, a Forbes, and many other excellent writers in our memory, we may venture as far in behalf of the profession in England.

This is an age the characteristic of which is that which Marx describes, when important and pressing interests direct the attention to economy of time, conciseness, richness in useful notes, &c., and such is, we think, precisely the character of the writings of our most useful medical authors,—of Dr. Holland, of Professor Graves, of Marshall Hall,—as of those we have already mentioned, singularly contrasted with the prolixity and quaintness of writers of a former century. But we must leave this inviting topic, and revert for a moment to Dr. Marx’s enumeration of medical poets, chiefly for the purpose of supplying a few omissions in his list. He says the study of medicine has not been favorable to poetry. In England we have had two poets of note who were medically educated, Akenside and Goldsmith, and the former of these was engaged in

actual practice. Schiller and Herder were educated as surgeons,—and Eugene Sue, who, though not a poet in the strict sense of the term, is a writer in a department nearly allied to poetry, was of the same profession: so also was Smollett.

The Letter we have been considering abounds throughout with wit and humour, and with that peculiar play of words in which its author seems to delight, but which it is almost impossible to infuse into another language. Amongst other subjects on which this playful humour is exercised, is that of *Manuals*. It is one thing, indeed, to use these works in early study as a substitute for patient and laborious industry, it is another thing in after-life to use them as remembrancers of former knowledge, when the means or the time debar the hard-working practitioner from better helps. In the one case they are justly discountenanced, in the other we think they are often valuable.

The Letter concludes with a humorous and amusing list of Prize Themes.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF ALBERT THAER.

Albert Daniel Thaer was born at Zell, in the state of Hanover, May 14th, 1752. His father was John Frederic Thaer, physician to the King of Hanover. He appears to have been naturally of a sensitive and enthusiastic temperament, and unfortunately his early associates had drunk deeply into those sentiments which were then fascinating the young and ardent spirits in France, England, and Germany. He read the writings of Voltaire and of the English freethinkers, and his mind was so affected by them that it was with the greatest difficulty he prevailed on himself to go through the ceremony of confirmation, which it is well known is considered in Germany an important and indispensable step in a young man's life. In his eighteenth year he went to the University of Gottingen to study for the medical profession. His facile disposition and love of pleasure had acquired for him hitherto an indifferent character as a pupil, insomuch that one person said of him that "since something had been made of him he should in future despair of no one." At Gottingen, however, he quite retrieved his reputation. In the second half year he began, contrary to the advice of his friends, to hear lectures on practical medicine. He was, indeed, already much more accomplished than was supposed in medical science. He says, in his own sketch of his life,

that he held it a fortunate circumstance that he adhered to his own judgment in this matter, as there was then one of the ablest teachers of practical medicine whom he had ever known, namely, Schröder, who wondered at the young man's determination, but soon detected his ability, became very fond of him, gave him private instructions, and allowed him to visit his patients and to study disease at the bedside of the sick. In these studies he caught a putrid fever, and was dangerously ill. Schröder, who was watching by him at night, remarked, supposing that he was incapable of understanding him, "The subsultus increases." "Then," exclaimed Thaer, immediately, "I shall die in four days, according to the maxim of Hippocrates; prepare my father for it." He recovered, however, but with the temporary loss of his memory; shortly afterwards Schröder fell ill of the same complaint, and charged his wife not to allow any one to be called to him but his pupil, but she neglected this advice, sent for other physicians after he became delirious, and he died. His next teacher was Ernest Godfrey Baldinger, a descendant of Martin Luther's. This professor had established an institution in which poor persons received medicine gratis, and had their cases examined by about thirty students in medicine; here Thaer began to display his medical knowledge. Baldinger, who looked upon him as a mere boy, not sufficiently advanced to profit by his lectures, repulsed him at first contemptuously, but afterwards received him to great favour and intimacy. His anxiety to investigate every disease kept him constantly by the sick bed, and his opinions obtained for him so much confidence, that he says he had more patients as a student at Gottingen than he afterwards had as a physician. He took care, however, in order to escape censure, never to write a prescription himself, but contrived to get a military surgeon named Tolle to write what he ordered and take the fee, with which

the other was well content. He at last took his doctor's degree, and returned crowned with laurels, and followed by thanks and tears to his father's house at Zell. It should be mentioned that during his student life he wrote a fragment on the Education of the Human Race, in which he propounded his own theories in religion. This fragment was published by his friend Lessing, and attained much celebrity, but was not known till long afterwards to be his. His inaugural dissertation, on attaining his doctor's degree, on the 11th May, 1774, at Gottingen, was entitled '*De Actione Systematis Nervosi in Febribus.*' On his return to his native place, the young doctor had to encounter a species of trial which many similarly gifted and equally aspiring have had to bear, the prejudices and suspicions of the narrow-minded and ignorant. Medical practice in those parts was at least fifteen years behind the times, and all the important discoveries and improvements which those fifteen years had brought to the world were looked upon by the influential practitioners as so many wild fancies. Thaer would gladly have returned to Gottingen, if he could have done so with honour. In 1776 he paid a visit to a friend in Berlin, where he found himself in his element, and was caressed and courted in the best circles. He had acquired by degrees an independence of character, which elevated him above the annoyances of his native place. He now treated his patients after his own method, instead of deferring, as heretofore, to the practice of his father, who kindly and wisely allowed him to follow his own judgment. Some successful cures at this time began to bring him into notice. It was at this early period of his medical career that a rich tradesman one day sent for him, and received him with these words: "You will become in time a prosperous practitioner, but you are still too young. I only wished to see you before employing you." Thaer drew himself up, and stood erect before

him: "Have you seen me enough in front?" "Yes." "Now then observe me carefully from behind," and therewith walked straight out of the door. Zell appeared to this child of genius as a melancholy exile, and he considered every hour lost which he did not spend in study. He divided his attention between medicine and philosophy, and from philosophy he wandered into the wildest metaphysical speculations. His enthusiastic temperament and overheated brain precipitated him from false and dangerous principles to moral deviations, for he records in his autobiographical sketch, an unhappy entanglement with the wife of one of his friends, which wounded his conscience and impeded his usefulness during the space of four years. Of the state of his mind at this time he gives a truly affecting picture.* He was, at length, enabled to throw off the connexion, and was happily united in marriage to an excellent and valuable person, Philippine von Willich. His autobiographical sketch, from which these particulars are taken, was addressed to her before the marriage; it is a beautiful and interesting composition, and contains some very instructive passages. We cannot forbear the following specimen;—he is alluding to his own fall.

"The ancient philosophers have much disputed whether there be one virtue only or many, one vice or many. It depends, as it appears to me, on what our notion of virtue and vice is; for him who strives after a steady perfection in soul, there is but one virtue. He who, on the contrary, looks upon virtue in relation to civil society, and calls that virtue which advances public and private happiness, and that vice which disturbs it, he may have many virtues and many vices. I believe that these opinions are not merely speculative, but have a real influence on practice. He who adopts the first notion, not in word merely, but embraces it as warmly

* See the quotation in Marx's letter, p. 113.

and sincerely as I did—he, if he sinks in one respect, sinks in all. Christ says, Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. I feel, Lord, thy truth!”*

At the time of Thaer's marriage, he was physician to the Elector, and the most distinguished and successful practitioner in his native town. Of his celebrity his father, the old physician, had a ludicrous proof when meeting a countryman on the steps of his house, just as he was setting out on his medical round, he asked him what he wanted: “Is Doctor Thaer at home?” asked the boor, in a broad provincial dialect. “I am Doctor Thaer.” “Ah, you are the old one, I want the young one; he is the cleverest!” The old doctor called his housekeeper, and drily stating the fact, bid her conduct the man to his son.

His practice and his gains increased continually, and no wonder, for he was truly a physician in every sense of the word,—feeling deeply for the sufferings of his patients, and labouring indefatigably in each individual case to discover that recondite cause and that peculiar organism which might decide the peculiar treatment. Amidst all his success, however, there lurked a secret spring of personal weariness and dissatisfaction.

“Fortunate as he was in his profession, he was, however, much disquieted not only by the tenderness of his disposition, which could not lightly bear up against the many painful scenes which he witnessed by the sick bed, but also by his acute intellect, united with an uncompromising love of truth, which compelled him to acknowledge that it is not given to mortals to penetrate the utmost mysteries of concealed organisms; their various powers, workings, and the ceaseless forms which they present; that therefore the treatment of the most skilful physician, in the most difficult

* Korte's Life of Thaer.

cases, can only be an experiment. At the same time, to his straightforward honesty, his inflexible love of truth, it was revolting to dissemble, to conceal from the chronic patient the danger and hopelessness of his case; to write a prescription with a confident and hope-inspiring countenance, from which in his own mind he expected little effect. Often did he think of the humorous confession of Hippocrates, that in the most difficult cases the medical art is but a drama, in which the patient, the disease, and the physician make sport of each other.”*

His favorite recreation, and that to which he resorted as a relief from these harassing considerations, was the cultivation of flowers, when “animal nature in its diseased state had exhausted his strength, healthy vegetable nature procured him refreshment and exhilaration.” He paid much attention to the raising of new varieties of carnations and auriculas; his wife’s talent for drawing assisted him greatly in making known the results of his experiments to other florists. His first love of rural pursuits is probably to be traced to the landscapes in which Philippine excelled.

His medical labours grew more and more distasteful to him, although he was almost deified by his patients. In addition to the causes of dissatisfaction already hinted at, he suffered much from rheumatic affections, and from distracting headache, which rendered the atmosphere of sick rooms at times intolerable to him.

From flowers he turned his attention to gardening and husbandry. He possessed a large garden behind the gates of Zell, near that ancient fortress where the unfortunate Caroline of England languished out her life, after the tragedy of Struensee and Brandt had driven her as an exile from her matrimonial crown of Denmark. Subsequently he enlarged his possessions by the purchase of more

* Korte’s Life of Thaer.

land and farm buildings, and commenced farmer. He did not, indeed, entirely give up his profession, but took a young practitioner as a colleague, and devoted only a part of the day to agricultural studies.

In the year 1796, he was made physician in ordinary to George III. Whatever engaged his interest, was pursued by him with characteristic energy, and he now devoted himself with ardour to the improvement of agricultural science in his native land. He established a model farm, and an institution for agricultural pupils, in which he read lectures. He also published many useful works, amongst others, one on English husbandry, for which he received the thanks of the English Board of Agriculture through their President Sir John Sinclair. It was the British husbandry which he was mainly desirous to see introduced into Germany.

In the year 1803, Hanover being occupied by French troops, and his labours, of course, much interrupted, he began to turn his thoughts towards Prussia, and receiving a cordial invitation from Frederic William to remove into his dominions, and there carry out his useful designs, he resigned, in 1804, his appointment as physician to his Britannic Majesty, to consecrate himself, as he said, "entirely to the service of Ceres in another land." He established himself at Möglin, where he passed in agricultural pursuits the remainder of his days.

He died on the 20th October, 1828, honoured and lamented, not only in his own country, but in foreign lands.

On one occasion the celebrity of his name did good service. When, in 1804, General Picard was commandant at Zell, a friend of Thaer's, who had come on a visit to him, was arrested for want of passports. Thaer went immediately to the general, to offer security for his friend. He was asked what was his name, and gave it. "Terr? Terr? je ne connais pas ce nom." He replied, "ce n'est pas ma

faute ; mon nom est assez connu, et même à Paris. Si vous y connaissez un certain Chaptal et François de Neufchatel, dont je viens de recevoir des lettres, vous verrez qu'on m'y connaît !" and immediately he pulled out two letters from these persons, which he fortunately had by him. That would not, however, have much helped him, had it not been for some officers present, who satisfied the general that he was one of the *litterati* of the land, and with a "cela suffit !" he discharged his friend.

His monument, observes his biographer, is the Manor of Möglin, a name which he has made famous throughout Europe. Here he perfected his lessons, here he established them. Here he laid the foundations of scientific husbandry. Here he earned the fame, which was conferred upon him after his death by a certain nobleman, namely, that he was as great a benefactor to Prussia as Blucher.

His biographer justly observes, that owing probably to the circumstance that many of the sciences connected with medicine, such as Botany, Chemistry, Mineralogy &c., being precisely those sciences which have the most to do with agriculture, the art of husbandry has been most signally served by men eminent as physicians, and he gives as examples, (observing that this has been particularly the case in England,) the names of Cullen, Hunter, the Darwin's, Fordyce, and Wilkinson. Amongst the letters of Lettsom, are many on agricultural subjects, and at the present day, we find these topics receive valuable assistance from writers of the medical profession.

LETTER TO ALBRECHT THAER.

"He who has read in your excellent inaugural dissertation your spirited remarks on the 'Value of the Medical Art,'* who knows how successfully you laboured as a medical practitioner, and how, when in the very height of your professional activity, at the very time when you had first been appointed domestic physician to the King of Great Britain, how you declined the appointment, exchanging the doctoral hat for the straw hat of the agriculturist, might be puzzled between you and medicine.

"I am in neither of these predicaments, and this comprehension of your secret motives in this important crisis, inspires me with confidence, even after your death, in addressing you thereupon.

"It is a matter of frequent experience in universities, that students of law or divinity quit their professional studies to choose the study of medicine, but it very seldom occurs that a medical student is unfaithful to his flag.

"Aversion to the smell of dead bodies, to dissection, to bloody operations, and especially to the sick chamber,

* 'De Actione Systematis Nervosi in Febris.' Gottingæ, 1774. Also in Ludwig, *Scriptores Neurologici Minores*, t. iii, pp. 240-93. Here it is said, "§ I. Scientia medica, humanarum omnium præstantissima, jucundissima, utillissima. § III. Indefesso ætissimorum ingeniorum studio magnus hodie rei medicæ cumulus accessit, ut spem inde majorem hujus rei conceipere possimus. Nos etiam, proavis longe feliciores, sæculum fert, quod singulari suo scientiæ naturalis studio, ut characteristico signo, æternam sibi laudem peperit. Quam multa, quæ olim latuere, seimus! Parentes in experimentis instituendis factisque colligendis singularem diligentiam posuerunt et nobis tantum reliquerunt thesaurum, ut vix amplius de augendo isto solliciti esse, sed potius id curare debeamus, ut illo recte fruamur eumque in nostrum convertamus commodum . . . Ad insignem certitudinem deduci posse medicinam, credibile est."

which at times appears constitutional, is for the most part overcome, and with inconceivable thirst of knowledge, every opportunity for medical science and practice is sought out.

“But let us suppose that we have left the university, that we must act on our own responsibility, that the profession begins to show its dark side, knowledge and power their limits, that at sick beds and in families bitter trials multiply, there may succeed indeed a certain dissatisfaction with the selected line of life, annoyance at its indispensable conditions, even a perplexity as to the profession, but these do not easily reach the height of an entire relinquishment of it.

“Theophrastus of Hohenheim, confesses of himself in this respect, * ‘I have many times resolved with myself to quit the profession. I have often been forsaken by it, and have practised it reluctantly, but I attribute this to my own simplicity.’

“Such a struggle of the individual with the world takes place most frequently in the noblest natures; the delicacy of their feelings is too often unpleasantly shocked, their conscientiousness is too often tried, their sense of honour too often assailed. The day, however, which gives the wound brings the balsam; a change of outward employment relieves the pressure of these sensibilities; custom makes its influence felt; a consciousness of necessity is more cultivated, trust in the incalculable amount of human strength, and the circumscribed limits of particular means enforces capitulation. The subjection of their own wishes is commonly the result; the extreme step of a rupture with their vocation is avoided.

“How much must usually precede the breaking the bonds

* See my work: ‘Zur Würdigung des Theophrastus von Hohenheim.’ Göttingen, 1842, iv, s. 62.

of friendship or marriage! One's profession is likewise a sacrament, if not of the heart, of time and mind. Before one can bring one's self to such a parting, the peace of the soul must be endangered, trust broken, and hope irretrievably violated.

"Such a situation is enough to lead to despair and self-destruction, and even then it could only excite a mournful sympathy, but should it end in the adoption of another not less fair vocation, we must acknowledge therein the leadings of destiny.

"Those who will cast a glance upon your inward thoughts will have all made easy to them. In the sketch of your autobiography, those confessions to your bride,* where, as Bürger† once did, you so openly impart your experience, is a sufficient explanation of the step which you took is furnished.

"Your determination to give up the medical profession was not owing to the little or great annoyances of its position, nor was it the flight of a physician in depressed circumstances through public neglect; no, in the fullest prosperity, honoured, yea, in the height of your renown, you determined on the parting.

"Dissatisfied with your moral position, with your practical achievements, austere towards yourself, justly balancing advantages and results, you could no longer endure the mistaken judgments of the public.

"At the time when you deemed yourself to possess a

* "Mein Lebenslauf und Bekenntnisse für Philippine:" (My course of life and acknowledgments for Philippine.) Körte's 'Biography of Thaer.' Leipsic, 1839.

† 'Confession of a man who will not deceive a noble maiden,' in Dr. L. C. Althof's 'Account of the most remarkable passages in the Life of Gottfried August Bürger.' Göttingen, 1798. viii, s. 125, etc.

claim to cordiality, confidence and indulgence, you were painfully misapprehended, and then when you were most dissatisfied with yourself you received a full recognition of your merit.*

“For this sensitiveness of feeling you early laid a foundation, when, before your confirmation, you read Voltaire’s works, and during your student-life wrote a treatise on the education of the human race.† Thus you were early obliged to come to the doubt of the origin of truth, and also to the strife with reigning opinion. But the Bible has long since taught us, that he who wrestles with the Lord comes out of the combat halting in his thigh.

“Attracted towards philosophical inquiries, and towards

* Your own words show this affecting state of mind the most forcibly. A. a. O. S. 44. “I fell in every respect. Every good, noble, and great disposition of my soul became weak, wellnigh extinguished. Longing after truth, trust in God, love of mankind, general benevolence, even friendship, conscientiousness in my duties, love of order, all, all lessened. My intellectual powers became so out of use that I could scarcely understand what in former years I had written myself. The public alone judged me otherwise. Formerly was I infinitely beyond what I appeared, now I appeared infinitely more than I was. Formerly I struggled against the weakness of mankind, now I made use of them. Formerly I was wise, now I was artful. My outward prosperity increased. I began to be looked upon as a learned, experienced physician, and yet I was truly a much worse practitioner than when I came from Gottingen. I was flattered in every manner. My income was considerable, more so than I could ever have expected in Zell. Although I equally disregarded interest in my practice, more was pressed on me than I willingly accepted. Thus did fortune appear to declare for the unworthy.”

† This fragment on Religion is the same which, under the title Fragments of the Anonymous of Wolfenbüttel’ (Fragmente des Wolfenbüttelchen Ungenannten), became through Lessing’s means so celebrated. See Körte a. a. O. S. 17. G. E. Guhrauer (Lessing’s Erziehung des Menschen-geschlechts. Berlin, 1841) vindicates Lessing from this writing.

the consideration of passive nature in the open air, you became alienated from the more material studies of the physician, and from the unpleasant duty of visiting the sick chamber, the more completely as it appears that overheated rooms gave you distracting headache, the sufferings of the sick excited suffering in you, and the sight of wounds and operations made you shudder and even faint.

“Your spirit knew and needed other nourishment. Your bodily frame was not adapted to the requirements of your position ; whilst your mind was more oppressed by the trials of your profession than elevated by its enjoyments. Wearied with practice, you sought at first recreation amongst pinks and auriculas, whose colour and smell had on you, like the sound of rushing water on the fisher-boy, the effect of enchantment ; you sank overpowered into the world of flowers.

“We need not be anxious lest your exchange of the cock of Æsculapius for the barn-door cock,—the sick bed for the flower bed—the surgery for the granary,—should find many imitators at least, for the greater part, instead of by these means laying the foundation of their fame, would injure it.

“The mere ordinary practitioner can lay no claim to the liberty conceded to the man of genius. That you did not betake yourself to the country merely for personal ease, agricultural literature and a grateful nation are bound to acknowledge.

“The visionary, and he alone, thinks the distant country as beautiful as it appears when enveloped in blue ether ; intercourse with external nature exacts also heavy sacrifices ; atmospheric agents hold us in continual dependence, and their caprices must be borne by those who follow agricultural pursuits.

“Had you ever in your old age made a confession, who

knows whether you might not have acknowledged that the beats of the holiday drum at Möglin, often reminded you of the beats of the drum (*Bombus*), as a symptom of congestion of the brain; that the Alps did not so much excite your interest as the Alp (nightmare), and that a glance at the blue heavens involuntarily, and not unwillingly, reminded you of the blue sickness (cyanosis).

“Were you not also compelled sometimes to accommodate yourself to circumstances contrary to nature, and to do what is so difficult to a medical man,* namely, to draw a disguise over your true character?”

“Did you, in the cultivation of the earth, never experience something similar to what you had experienced in former years, when the physician behaves to the patient like a lover to his mistress, but the patient to the physician like a husband to his wife?”

“Did you, indeed, in the laying down of local methods of culture, feel the enthusiasm which once you felt in your expectations from medical skill? and did you, in the rooting out of weeds, receive an impulse as exciting as once, in your scientific treatment of important cases, in the rooting out of diseases? These, like mischievous animals and noxious plants, by the combined use of means, will be forced away from their accustomed localities, which are progressively converted into secure abodes of rectitude and harmony. These great changes are, indeed, of slow operation, but they are the known, as well as the unknown, object of all remedial efforts. A time will come when the amateurs in nosology, like the friends of humanity for the primitive races of mankind, will unite in an aborigines

* It is as much our duty, perhaps, to maintain an artificial character in many professions in life, as to support a moral character in our general conduct. (*Observations on the Character of a Physician.* London, 1772, p. 102.)

protection society for the conservation of the remnant of human diseases.

“Benevolence had, moreover, so much to do with your occupation amongst the clods of the earth that, in your present state, you have no need to lament over it, but are able to entertain yourself with other things than with old predilections.

“How far your taste for reading may have undergone a modification, since you exchanged an English farm for the land of angels, I am in no situation to estimate; yet, I venture, relying on your abundant leisure, to lay before you the following Aphorisms of a physician on ordinary and professional life.

“As the ancients threw their letters into the funeral pile that the deceased might, even in Orcus, read them, so throw I, as my last offering, these sheets after you. They are thoughts which are the production to which the fleeting hours or rather minutes gave rise; nevertheless some of those little hidden flowers, which the earth produces when they are tempted forth by the warm rays of the sun, may yet spring up amongst them.

“The practitioner who has had most experience is Time, and the medicine which is easiest to take is Patience.

“Æsculapius has the serpent coiled round his staff as a symbol of rejuvenescence; but it should also remind us how often the physician has to deal with the coldness and the poisonous fangs of mankind.”

* Fuit moris Galatarum, ut defuncti familiares et affines inscriptas epistolas ad rogum conjicerent, velut apud inferos mortui illas mox lecturi forent. (Alexander ab Alexandro Geniales. Dies. l. iii, c. 7, ed. Lugduni Bat. 1673, 8, p. 642.)

APHORISMS.*

The most instructive history to the physician, is the history of disease.

Many consciences sleep without opiates.

The native language of sorrow is sympathy.

The greeting which the invalid expects, "I hope you are better," sounds like an insult to the healthy.

Wit is like a person of a fine sanguine temperament, he is born with a clear brilliant complexion, and retains it all his life long.

Early paths are often forbidden paths.

Physicians are born honorary members of all human societies.

Every vein, except a silver vein, leads back to the heart.

The physician must, like the diplomatist, tread softly.

The physician has principally to do with the weakness and weak side of mankind, but it would be bad if he were to study these alone.

Much drink drowns health.

In the world, as in the laboratory, our part is to analyse and to determine accurately individual objects.

Conscientious physicians are as little to be blamed for the death of their patients, as a new-born infant for the death of its mother.

Many a one has nothing holy about him except the os sacrum.

Physicians who love system, often systematically follow small ends.

* These aphorisms, in the original work, extend to forty-five pages. A great proportion of them are *medical puns*, the point of which is entirely lost by translation. Of those which remain, such only are given which appear to convey some useful or ingenious remark.

It is with many friendships as with the teeth, when the enamel wears off they begin to give pain.

A trifler sometimes, by the visitation of death, is made watchful, as the sleeper wakes up when the night lamp goes out.

As a fistula is most quickly cured by opening, so are secret sins by open confession.

Bashfulness is as incurable as hydrophobia.

Lunar caustic is white, but blackens; the hypocritical countenance smiles openly, but blackens privately.

To gild the pill is out of fashion, but it is still necessary to gild the palm.

Malice is unknown to the physician, who only desires to render assistance.

Deliberation promotes decision, but does not create action.

We begin a new life when we espouse the right side.

Most men, even soldiers, risk their lives but once—the physician often.

Autobiography unrolls a mummy before a mirror.

If one must be consumed, let it be rather in the duties of life than on the funeral pyre.

Reviewers are like the scourge, as the tails of comets, they alarm the weak, but do the strong no harm.

The scarcer the game, the more eager the sportsman—the boy rests not till he grasps the beautiful butterfly, and society rests not till it can cast a spot on the purest nature.

Many a one cannot read what is written in his conscience, because he must so frequently eradicate the bad.

The world will become more and more polite, for since mankind are always prone to treat with respect that which is new, whether it be a new garment or a new friend, so the great increase of communication bringing us continually into contact with new acquaintance, will render the politeness which they require so frequent as to become habitual.

The wise man is not so much he who understands a *great deal*, but he who understands what leads to permanent happiness.

He who has no theory is no practitioner.

Herder and Schiller, originally surgeons, in the latter part of their career ceased to open veins, but opened a heaven to thousands.

The rich have an idiosyncrasy, not against devils but against *poor* devils.

Men think more of those who give them gold, than of those who give them health.

To a careless physician whom one would not trust with a bank cheque ten minutes together, a man will trust his body for years.

A friendship which quickly ceases, cools the heart like evaporating naphtha.

Remarkable men are first fully recognized, when they die, as departing ships leave behind them a train of phosphoric light.

Medicine has for centuries served as a prop to natural science, a benefit which the latter has repaid by making the other feel its superiority.

It is with principles as with copper-plates; after a time they wear out.

We should do with our acquirements as Tippoo Saib with his string of pearls, always be upon the look-out for a most costly one.

As water inwardly expands itself in freezing, so does a strong mind amidst the torpidity of surrounding cold.

He who governs himself, governs also even when he must obey others.

Kind words do in life what honey does in an electuary, they bind heavy miscible things together.

Death, like the apothecary, gathers roots in the spring, flowers when they are fully blown, and fruits after they are fully ripe.

Powerful minds, like the American aloe, attain their youth in old age.

The physician needs a chart rather than a map, it is more important to him to know what to avoid than where to tarry.

As fluids stand highest in the smallest capillary, so the emptiest head carries itself ever the highest.

The worst inheritance is an hereditary disease.

Eminent men are the lighthouses of mankind.

Do those who look sour carry about with them their trials preserved in vinegar?

There are authors who grow to giants by filling reams of paper, yet the sling of a Review throws down the Goliath.

He who listens to all kinds of communications, holds his ear over a sounding-shell.

The galvanic column is Galvani's pillar of fame.

Before weeping eyes opposition trembles.

Our knowledge resembles waiting before a closed glass door, through which we are only permitted to look, not to enter.

Painful experience like narcotic poisons makes us cold.

The innocence of youth has no merit in it, even poisonous plants in the first year of their germination are harmless.

Only he whose purpose is to save is a member of the Humane Society.

Let the dead rest is a good saying, even the bear bites them no more.

He who looks into the Hospital of Invalids and sees how much contentment may consist with but few limbs, will be ashamed of complaining of imaginary annoyances.

As many roots and flowers are more powerful dried than in their fresh state, so the influence of many men is greater after their death than during their lives.

Individual judgment has the same relation to public

judgment as the watch to the town clock. The former may go ever so rightly, it must be regulated by the latter.

The more the directions of a physician resemble pastoral letters rather than police regulations, the less will they be followed.

The heaviest and the lightest, gold and thought, always keep their value.

The highest praise of a clever book is when it is taken up with pleasure in the hours of sorrow or delight.

Politics bear the same relation to medicine as the remedy Lead to Saturn, who devoured his children. Even the first requisition, to belong to a party, the physician must decline.

As judicial torture, so the vivisection of animals wrings out answers by which humanity is silenced.

It is more than cruel to speak of disease as the punishment of guilt; for what must he have committed in whose heart the wild beast Angina Pectoris has had his claws for years?

He who cannot find an article sometimes fancies it is stolen. So a practitioner, who cannot hit the right view of a case, will sometimes find fault with the uncertainty of remedies, and the pernicious influence of external circumstances, rather than with the deficiency of his own judgment.

A medical consultation is a professional pic-nic. In scientific discussions strife should always be shut out, as in the Eternal City the Temple of Bellona was placed outside the walls.

The poor often possess in greater abundance than the rich the most valuable treasures, namely, health and a good conscience.

It is as difficult in general to decide what is truth and what is folly, as what is physic and what is poison.

Days of happiness make the past like a conservatory in which fragrant plants are kept.

No rich man has so silent and trustworthy a servant as the poor student in a good book of reference.

The wise physician treats the healing power of Nature as the sunflower the sun, he follows it till it becomes invisible.

Let him who desires to secure valuable papers deposit them between the pages of the folio work of some pretended scholar. He may rely on no one disturbing them.

Nature deals with life, man alone honours the dead. When do we find in the wood or the field the preserved skeleton of an animal? The remnants of life disappear without a trace to serve for the maintenance of other life.

The faults of youth spring from mistaken opinions; the situations of life require, as they themselves do, to attain a certain degree of steadiness. They have no insight into the perfect organization of the positions in life. He who enters a diorama requires time to adapt his vision to the obscurity around him before he can be aware that he is standing amongst hundreds of other spectators.

The wounds which Destiny inflicts are simple and easily healed, i.e. incised wounds; on the contrary, those which man inflicts, are lacerated wounds, which close slowly and leave scars behind.

The most innocent and most thoughtful men smile much but laugh little.

Ugliness has this advantage over beauty, that it is not so transitory.

The greatest teachers of the physician, Nature and the ancients, are always young. Experience itself is an ever-springing fountain.

Slander, like a breath on a mirror, obscures for a moment the image, rub it off, that image is all the brighter.

Many a one, dissatisfied with the surface of the busy present, would know what life conceals in its unknown depths; but he who, dissatisfied with the reflection of a mirror, goes behind it, sees nothing but his own blind folly.

A man hardened against changes of temperature does not easily take cold, but should he wander about clothed only in his virtue, he would certainly become rheumatic.

Dreams are metamorphoses of past reminiscences, representations of the present with the decorations of the past, discoloured leaves in the autumn of the wishes, shooting stars in the firmament of our consciousness.

The self-murderer must be judged of as one in delirium. Disgust of life, even to self-destruction, is a chronic or an acute disease, for which the right physician has not hitherto been found.

Truth makes men morally, medicine bodily, free.

Insensible natures are little affected by the active workings of life ; hence they last the longer. The Siberian ice preserves the mammoth entire, even to the skin and hair, and has done so since the flood.

Noble is the medical profession in this view, that it gives so much opportunity to recompense evil with good, and to shame egotism if not to overcome it.

The art of discovering the curative rank of every remedy, and judiciously prescribing it, may be considered the heraldry of medicine.

Shade is the consequence of light being intercepted by some intervening object. He who has nothing remarkable in his life shines as an especial favorite of Apollo.

As the verdant meadow has the greatest charm for the eye, but the hay-field for the smell, so the actual present deed attracts most admiration, but the deed embalmed by death, the greater fame.

In highly-cultivated and noble-minded men, the chambers of the heart and brain are *cameræ lucidæ*, and the *camera obscura* of the eye reflects faithfully and beautifully the image of the world.

The Mind complains that Nature does not easily for-

give. A good resolution cleanses the penitent soul, but poison taken into the body is not easily got rid of.

Much pain is taken to arrest the circulator of false coin. Why should not the same pains be taken to arrest the circulator of a false report? The word "devil" is etymologically equivalent to "slanderer."

Short illnesses, like short imprisonments, amend the life, long ones injure it.

Security in all situations of life depends on circumstances. So long as the rain pours down, a tree is a shelter, but as soon as the skies clear, the trees begin to rain from their leaves.

A memory which treasures up what has already been found injurious is the best of preservatives, and in many cases far more valuable than weighing sophistical reasonings.

The finest emblem and model of ceaseless activity is the beating of the heart. This organ is at once the strongest, the most perseveringly triumphant over difficulties, and the organ that least requires rest. When it ceases to work the life which it maintains ceases also.

A man may be known by his style. He stamps his internal image on it; but such a picture, faithful as it may be in resemblance, is but seldom successful and interesting.

Although many physicians are more friendly with death than is right towards the living, they are strangely neglectful of their departed great men. A medical Plutarch is yet a desideratum. A biography, or at least a defence of another's memory, resembles that last service of love, which amongst the Romans was rendered to the deceased, namely, driving away the flies from the face and hands.

The Heroes of the medical profession were for the most part noble men. What they did was more a question of conscience than of science. Medicine appeared with them to be a practical code of morals, and the physician resem-

bled not merely a Brother of Mercy, but a Trappist digging the grave of his vocation by his efforts to exterminate disease.

As we call the air the *pabulum vitæ*, we may call sprightly humour, that ethereal spirit, the nourishment of the soul; but as some are susceptible of the least change in the atmosphere, so are weak minds unable to bear the light breezes of sprightliness.

A physician who writes anything but professional formularies makes himself conspicuous. Writings which are not clothed in the form of prescriptions will neither gain due consideration nor respect; such persons appear to disregard the warning of the god who stands beside Æsculapius; for is not the finger which Telesphorus holds to his lips the writing finger?

The best regulation for the medical profession consists in dignified humanity: this will prescribe, in the simplest manner, its relation to the state, to science, to the public, and to the university. Pure morals, able qualifications, thorough cultivation, are the safest guides.

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO THAER.

The Memoir we have given of Thaer will, we think, throw light on some of those passages in this interesting letter which, without it, would have been obscure.

The point which is set most prominently before us, in Thaer's history, is his relinquishment of his profession, a case which occurs, according to Marx, less frequently amongst medical men than in any other walk in life.

In detailing the causes which led to this result, our author's quotations seem calculated to convey an impression at first sight, which the life of Thaer, from which they are taken, does not bear out. They seem to intimate that

his dissatisfaction with medical life was owing, in part, at least, to the erroneous opinions entertained of him by others; but, in the life itself, we find that the passages quoted had reference to a much earlier period of his history. His biographer Körte lays down very clearly the motives which induced his gradual withdrawal from practice. These were: 1. His too great susceptibility of feeling. 2. His painful sense of the uncertainty of medical science. 3. His tendency to headache. Of the first and the last cause we need say little,—the former has been touched on in the letter to Hallé,—and, as to the latter, health, it is, of course, unanswerable; but, respecting the uncertainties of medical science we would offer a few remarks, and we shall begin by quoting a passage from Thaer's life, in addition to what we have already given in our biographical sketch.

“Theory appeared to him more and more a pretence of human intellect to render everything palpably clear to itself. On the contrary, he saw more and more how, on the other hand, practice exalted itself unbecomingly against theory, so that eminent physicians, and not merely common practitioners held theory almost for nothing, and consigned everything to the guidance of experience. He was compelled to recognize his age as a purely practical age,* since even those physicians who allowed something to theory, did so rather to gain the reputation of learning, than to attain by it any better results. The most part held theory for nothing further than a popular fashion,—a pastime of leisure moments. Since two different diseases never discover themselves by the same symptoms, empiricism classes diseases by certain similar appearances. Now it is admitted that many different diseases are alike in

* So Arnold says, “The philosophy of medicine, I imagine, is almost at zero; our practice is empirical, and seems hardly more than a course of guessing, more or less happy.” See his letter to Dr. Greenhill,—*Life*, vol. ii.

certain of their symptoms ; it is not, therefore, wonderful if practice, by no means searching out with great care the root of the disease, but guided only by certain symptoms, should take one disease for another, classify and treat it wrongly. Whatever blunders are charged upon practice, it may yet call on experience, and lean upon famous authorities. With what difficulty is a practitioner prevailed on to renounce his once approved method, which has often stood him in stead, unconcerned about the equally prized experience of other medical men ! So long as there are doctors, so long will each among the countless systems have its patron and champion. The miserable physician will not fail to justify his opinion, even by the death-bed of the victim of his mistaken treatment, partly by his own and other's manifold experience, partly by approved authorities ; whilst, in unsuccessful cases, even the most skilful and judicious practitioner is assailed by the clamour of bad management. Most medical men see only with the eyes of others, and nowhere are authorities made of such importance as in the healing art. There are a few who lead the great multitude, which, blindly following, would much rather err with their master than laboriously find out truth for themselves ; but even the greatest masters, if they generally lay hold of truth, mistake now and then ; unfortunately their errors take as deep root as their truths ; the multitude swear by the one as well as the other, for they do not so much inquire 'what has been said,' as, 'who has said it.'"* Such was the specious but false reasoning which influenced the susceptible mind of Thær ; but, before we attempt to reply to it, we will inquire what others have thought on the same subject.

Abercrombie has quoted, from D'Alembert, the instance of an eminent physician who relinquished a practice which

* Körte's Life of Thær.

he had exercised for thirty years, because, as he said, "he was tired of guessing." "The uncertainty of medicine," continues the excellent writer (so recently lost to the world), "resolves itself chiefly into an apparent want of that uniformity of phenomena which is so remarkable in other branches of physical science. There are, particularly, two departments of our inquiries, in which we feel continually the effect of this want of uniformity—the characters and the progress of disease—and the action of external agents upon the body. Since medicine was first cultivated as a science, a leading object of attention has ever been to ascertain the characters or symptoms by which particular internal diseases are indicated, and by which they are distinguished from other diseases which resemble them. But, with the accumulated experience of ages bearing upon this important subject, our extended observation has only served to convince us how deficient we are in this department, and how often, even in the first step of our progress, we are left to conjecture. A writer of high eminence has even hazarded the assertion that those persons are most confident, in regard to the characters of disease, whose knowledge is most limited, and that more extended observation generally leads to doubts. An equal or even a more remarkable uncertainty attends all our researches on the second head to which I have referred—the action of external agents upon the body. These engage our attention in two respects,—as causes of disease, and as remedies; and, in both these views, the action of them is fraught with the highest degree of uncertainty."*

On this subject Hufeland says, "The medical art is still far from that degree of perfection and certainty, which would enable us to pronounce sentence on all methods of curing diseases; we do not yet possess a legitimate uni-

* Abercrombie on the Intellectual Powers.

versal code; every one is still at liberty to form his own views about the human system and its treatment, provided they are not against reason and experience. Nobody will deny that cures may be effected in quite different ways, and that the apparent contradictions in treatment may dissolve into unity by the various operations of the organism. Organic nature is not confined within such narrow limits as our systems; if it were so, one after another would not have had its ascendancy, and been applied with success. After all, our experience and the result rightly derived therefrom, are the only true and constant rules to be followed in medicine; and the longer and the more sagaciously a physician has observed the operation of the living organism against the influence of the external world, and especially the influence of medicine, the more he has learnt to appreciate the powers of the latter, and to use them with adroitness, the more perfect physician he has become."

"There can be few better tests of a sound understanding," says Dr. Holland, in his 'Medical Notes and Reflections,' "than the right estimation of medical evidence; so various are the complexities it presents, so numerous are the sources of error. The subjects of observation are those in which matter and mind are concurrently concerned;—matter under the complex and subtile organization whence vitality and all its functions are derived; mind, in its equally mysterious relations to the organs thus formed;—both subject to numerous agencies from without,—both undergoing great changes from disease within. Individualities of each have their influence in creating difficulties, and these among the most arduous which beset the path of the physician. Few cases occur strictly alike, even when the source of disorder is manifestly the same. Primary causes of disease are often wholly obscured by those of a secondary kind. Organs, remote from each other by place and time,

are simultaneously disturbed. Translations of morbid action take place from one part to another. Nervous affections and sympathies often assume every character of real disease. While remedial agents are rendered uncertain in effect, by the various forms of each disorder, the idiosyncracies of the patient, by the difficulty of securing their equal application or transmission into the system, and, finally, by the unequal quality of the remedies themselves.

“These difficulties, the solution of which gives medicine its highest character as a science, can be adequately conceived by the medical man alone. Neither those accustomed to legal evidence only, nor such as have pursued physical science in its more simply material forms, can rightly apprehend the vast difference made by the introduction of the principle of life, or yet more, of the states and phenomena of mind in connexion with bodily organization. We have here a new world of relations, occult and complex in their nature, to be reasoned upon and resolved, with a principle of change, moreover, ever operating among them, which makes all conclusions liable to a new source of error. It is the want of this right understanding of medical evidence, which makes the mass of mankind so prone to be deceived by impostures of every kind; whether it be the idle fashion as to particular remedies; or the worse, because wider deception of some system, professing to have attained at once what the most learned and acute observers have laboured after for ages in vain.”

Similar testimonials to the difficulties of medical science, might be indefinitely multiplied were it needed. What, then, is the conscientious and upright medical man to do when assailed by scruples, such as harassed to a morbid degree the mind of the susceptible German? Abandon his profession? Fly from the trial? This were as much as in him lies to consign it to the reckless, to the unscrupulous.

pulous, to the unprincipled. The legitimate remedies are, first—

Deep, increasing, patient, and earnest effort to become more and more acquainted with the individual aspects of disease; a determination to spare no labour, no study for this object. In this Thaer was an example, as his Diaries, unhappily destroyed on his removal into Prussia, could testify, and certainly of all volumes one of the most useful would be the daily record of cases of such a man. Dr. Holland says, "It must be admitted that the methods of research in medicine at the present time have gained greatly in exactness and the just appreciation of facts upon those of any previous period; a natural effect of increasing exactness in all other branches of science. A very especial advantage here has been the application of numerical methods and averages to the history of disease; thereby giving it the same course and certainty of result which belong to statistical inquiry in other subjects. *Averages may in some sort be termed the mathematics of medical science.* It is obvious indeed, that the value of inferences thus obtained depends on the exact estimate of what are the *same facts*, what merely connected by resemblance or partial analogy. Pathological results essentially different may be classed together by inexact observers, or by separate observers, under different views. These, however, are errors incident to every human pursuit, and best corrected by numerous and repeated averages. The principle in question is indeed singularly effectual in obviating the difficulties of evidence already noticed; and the success with which it has been employed of late by many eminent observers, affords assurance of the results that may hereafter be expected from this source. Through medical statistics lies the most secure path into the philosophy of medicine."

Each individual record of cases is a contribution to medical statistics, and a provision against the uncertainties of medical science.

The writer of the clever article in the 'British and Foreign Medical Review' (Jan. 1846), on Homœopathy, Allopathy, and Young Physic, after enumerating several methods which would tend to promote reform in Practical Therapeutics, as for instance, the establishment of a true Natural History of human diseases—a fresh study of the physiological and curative effects of our therapeutic agents—the ascertaining what diseases are really capable of receiving benefit from medical treatment, and what are not—the introduction of a more philosophical and accurate view of the relations of remedies to the animal economy and to diseases—observes, "The general adoption by practitioners in recording their experience, of the system known by the name of the *numerical method*, is essential to the attainment of the ends proposed."

Dr. Watson, in his admirable Lectures, when defining Diagnosis, says, "Diagnosis forms the indispensable basis of all *advances* in physic as a practical art. When we can once identify a given diseased condition, we obtain the privilege of watching the behaviour of that diseased condition, again and again, under the operation of therapeutic measures; and from that time the increase of our knowledge, concerning the appropriate management of that particular disease, becomes progressive and sure. The term experience is obviously misapplied, and the results of all observation are vitiated, when any doubt exists about the sameness of the objects contemplated. *It is mainly to this imperfection in the diagnostic part of medicine, that we must attribute the uncertainty and variation both of doctrine and practice, which have brought so much suspicion and reproach and ridicule upon the science we profess. False experience*, if I may use the term, has greatly hindered the progress of the healing art; and *false experience* springs from *false diagnosis*. Accuracy of diagnosis, therefore, cannot be too highly estimated, nor too diligently sought after."

It is worth while to mention the way in which Sir Astley Cooper considered that he had obtained that quickness and certainty of diagnosis for which he was remarkable. It was, he said, "by his having made it a practice, when young, to see all the poor who would come to him, and thus he saw such a variety of disease as to make him as familiar with it as a parent with a child."

There is a letter amongst the Extracts from Correspondence on the homœopathic subject in the 'British and Foreign Medical Review,' (July, 1846,) which contains some very judicious observations, both on the uncertainties of medical science and the value of accurate diagnosis, and carefully corrected experience in removing them :

"Medicine is essentially a science of observation, and each case demands all the powers of observation that the individual practitioner can bring to it. You cannot reduce the practice of it to a mathematical formula ; in a word, you can never make medicine one of the exact sciences. Neither is it to be desired that it should, since its very standing as a science depends upon its complex and uncertain nature. Divest it of this, and reduce the practice of it to the mathematical precision and certainty which the homœopathic humbug pretends to, and it at once becomes degraded to a mere art, a trade, an occupation unworthy to be the object of the higher powers of the mind. I should like to have all our present knowledge retested by competent persons, but I greatly doubt if this is possible. Could this be done, a much greater degree of certainty would attach to our practice ; but the really feasible plan of reform and improvement will consist in elevating the standard of our professional character morally and intellectually, and teaching men the value of general principles as a guide through what must, in every individual case, be more or less an experimental procedure."

The next remedy we shall mention is, the cultivation of

that habit of mind which does not allow its grasp of truths once clearly and satisfactorily ascertained, to slacken, because there are other truths of which, in the present imperfect state of our knowledge, an equally firm grasp cannot be taken. Who can deny that there are truths, established, ascertained truths in medicine? Look at the signs of external inflammation. "*Notæ vero inflammationes sunt quatuor, rubor et tumor cum calore et dolore.*" Have they varied since the time of Celsus? Modified as they may be in each particular case by the organ attacked, or the idiosyncrasy of the patient, they are in themselves the same. Again, who can doubt the efficacy of quinine as a remedy in ague, &c.?

"It is" says Dr. Simon, "incontestable, that though there may exist in the science and art of medicine a certain number of gaps which authorize legitimate doubts, and which enjoin at the same time that circumspection, that caution, which never ought to be absent from the conduct of the physician, it is yet uncontestable that science and art do rest on a collection of positive principles which condemn on the part of the medical man that scepticism which some are not afraid to avow."

It is also to be considered that, to the eye of the intelligent and experienced man, there is much which cannot be reduced to written rules, but which serves him as a constant and all but infallible guide in seizing the true nature and characters of a disease, and which thus practically diminishes the apparent uncertainties of the science. A morbid and fastidious timorousness is a habit of mind almost as inimical to the real usefulness of the medical practitioner as the opposite, and perhaps more common evil, of unreflecting rashness. The remarks of Simon on the dangers and evils of this particular mental state are so excellent, and his examples so interesting, that we cannot

* Celsus de Medicina, lib. iii, cx.

refrain from giving the passage entire, even at the risk of repeating some things we have already said.

“ Whilst we regard prudence in the employment of those means at the disposal of the art as that moral quality which is most appropriate to the difficulties of the science, the uncertainties of the art, and the infirmity of the mind, medical men ought to be on their guard against falling into those scruples of some contracted minds, who, for fear of doing harm, renounce all active therapeutics. Petrarch, in one of his epistles, speaks of a physician who believed himself obliged by conscience to refrain from the practice of a science whose benefits were doubtful to him. Another physician, whose name escapes my memory, finished in the same manner by retiring from practice because he was tired of guessing. At a period nearer to our own time, Haller and Mascagni never passed over the limits of speculative science. The former, who would not venture to perform an operation upon a living person, only practised medicine for eighteen months in the hospital of Berne; the second declared the art too dangerous, *mestiere troppo pericoloso*. Lastly, a physician of Lyon, Vitet, the author of a work but little known, ‘*La Médecine Expectante*,’ renounced practice after a commencement which he judged unsuccessful, and only returned to it after having imposed silence on the scruples of his conscience by new studies. M. Jourdan, who records this latter fact, judiciously remarks, that the character of a man influences his choice of a doctrine:—thus, according to this author, the somewhat irresolute character of Vitet, which, more than a feeling of perhaps real incapacity, made him take the honorable resolution which we have just cited, led him subsequently to regard ‘*la méthode expectante*’ as the only rational method of therapeutics. We do not know whether the somewhat morose temper of Mascagni, which made him shun all society, will explain

the terrors with which practice inspired him; but as to Haller, when we study the moral character of this great man in Zimmerman, we cannot doubt that his aversion to practise arose, in part at least, from the indecision of a timorous mind;* human wisdom has always its limits.

“Imposing as may be the names we have quoted, and great as may be the advantage which the sceptics draw from the conduct of such men to attack the legitimacy of the art, these scruples ought not to shake the convictions which firm and straightforward minds have acquired in the school of facts, of the real efficacy of medicine. Medicine took its rise in the day when men began to make a serious study of the progress of disease, and although, like every science in its infancy, it could at first have consisted only of very contracted notions, it necessarily began very early to lay down some sound maxims of practice. In the abdication of Petrarch’s anonymous physician, though at that time the sciences in general, and medicine especially, had somewhat retrograded, there was, perhaps, more of pride and wounded vanity, than of true philanthropy. The man who could so well seize the dangers of common practice, might have found, in the science itself, the means of guarding against them, and have rendered an immense service to humanity. But if, according to our conviction, the men who first studied the progress of disease, must have attained some notions of sound practice, if these notions were not lost completely, even in the most barbarous ages, if, consequently, in all ages medical practice was an art useful to man, one cannot understand how minds so distinguished as Haller’s and Mascagni’s have avoided such practice as dangerous, and in fact it is not in

* So great was Haller’s aversion to practise, that when his own daughter brought her child to him for advice he merely said, “*Ma fille, il est bien malade, faites chercher un médecin.*”

the art itself, but in the intellectual character of the men that we must seek for the explanation. We do not know that there are at the present day many men who yield to the solicitations of such scruples, and in fact a more profound study of the material elements of disease, a more exact acquaintance with its progress and termination, a science of diagnostics of a much more advanced character, secure to the understanding a collection of positive notions, which free the most timorous consciences from scruple. Where there is a possibility of foresight there is evidently science, and the understanding cannot, without denying itself, refuse its faith to what enables it to foresee the progress of natural phenomena. Active therapeutics (we speak not of hygienic dietetics, which alone suffice to establish the reality of the art) themselves have equally a certain number of positive rules. But to be clearly conceived, and especially to be applied, this part of the science, one of the most important, demands a certain firmness and decision of mind, without which the physician sinks into a system of eternal temporization, which has its dangers as well as the most adventurous rashness. The medical man who detects in himself this moral defect, ought to direct all his efforts to triumph over it, under penalty of seeing his art struck in his hands with an actual powerlessness in certain cases, which imperiously demand severe remedies."

An important change appears in the present day to be taking place in the minds of many of the medical body, especially in its higher sections—a change favorable to greater reliance on the powers of Nature and on simple hygienic measures. Whilst we foresee from these changes a better era in the history of medicine, there is also some reason to fear the increase of medical scepticism, for which, in Simon's view, Homœopathy itself is only a decent name. Dr. Robert Williams is mentioned in an oration

to the Medico-Chirurgical Society as having had *no faith in medicine*. One can sympathise with men who, like Thaer, Haller, and others, declined practice from an over scrupulousness of mind and dissatisfaction with the state of the science, but it seems hardly consistent with moral honesty to continue to practise with such views of the medical art. Dr. Simon speaks very strongly on the subject. In vain, he says “by a sophism which the love of lucre may inspire, may he seek to persuade himself that in confining himself to the simple prescriptions of hygiene, or the precepts of abstinence, he cannot hurt the sick who trust in him, and that he is even useful in preserving them from a system of therapeutics which he thinks fatal; a *priest without faith*, he sports with the credulity of his victims, his life is a continual lie.” He adds, “Thanks to the progress of science, thanks chiefly to the discovery of new methods of exploration, which permit the most ordinary minds to follow in their development the local lesions which constitute or complicate the greater number of diseases, and to apply to them a more suitable course of therapeutics, this absolute scepticism is but rarely met with now amongst medical men.”

As for doubts like those of Thaer, deep and patient investigation of disease, and a healthy state of the mental faculties and moral feelings, are the only remedies—so to those whose dissatisfaction with the profession may arise from the annoyances mentioned in the letter as besetting the practitioner in an early part of his career, we would suggest the considerations urged by Sir Benjamin Brodie in his ‘Lectures on the Duties and Conduct of Medical Students and Practitioners:’ “Real difficulties are much to be preferred to those which are artificial or imaginary; for, of the former, the greater part may be overcome by talent and enterprise, while it is quite otherwise with the latter. Then there is no greater happiness in life than

that of surmounting difficulties ; and nothing will conduce more than this to improve your intellectual faculties, or to make you satisfied with the situation which you have attained in life, whatever it may be. I know," he says, " of no profession that is worthy of being pursued which does not require as much exertion, as much labour, as many sacrifices as that in which you are engaged, and I also know of none in which he who has the necessary qualifications is more sure of being rewarded for his labours."

The Aphorisms appended to the Letter to Thaer are both happy in expression and interesting in sentiment ; and we only regret that so few of them will bear transfusion into another tongue. We have selected chiefly (though not exclusively) those which bear on our main subject, and present, in a condensed form, principles more fully developed in the letters. They did not generally require distinct comment, though we may find occasion to illustrate some of them hereafter.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF DR. LETTSOM.

Dr. John Coakley Lettsom was born at Little Vandyke, an islet near the island of Tortola, Nov. 22, 1744. At the age of six he was sent to Europe for education, and consigned to the care of two brothers of the name of Rawlinson, merchants at Liverpool. Here he was thrown into the society of Quakers, and became acquainted especially with Samuel Fothergill, an eminent character amongst the Friends, and the brother of the celebrated Dr. John Fothergill of London. Lettsom's father died when he was in his fourteenth year, and no instructions having been transmitted with respect to his studies, he was sent to a seminary at Liverpool to learn merchants' accounts, preparatory to admission into a mercantile house. Shortly after, however, a relative, named Pickering, coming over from Tortola, was met at Liverpool by Samuel Fothergill, who had conceived an affectionate regard for young Lettsom; and these two friends agreed to take the guardianship of the orphan, and to send him apprentice to Abraham Sutcliff, a practitioner at Settle, in Yorkshire. Dr. Lettsom was ever grateful to Sutcliff for the kindness he received from him during his apprenticeship. Many years afterwards, when practising with high honour in London, he was visited by his old master, to whom he remarked, that as he was now old, and had a son qualified to succeed him in his general

practice, he ought to retire, and enjoy the easier earnings of a physician. Sutcliff replied that he had designed it, but was at a loss where to apply for a diploma, as his old teachers were no more. Dr. Lettsom immediately presented him with one, which he had procured for him against his arrival. "My lad," exclaimed the good old man, his eyes suffused with tears of joy, "this is more than I know how to acknowledge."

After a five years' apprenticeship in the obscure market-town of Settle, young Lettsom emerged into the great London world. The kindness of his friend, the worthy Samuel Fothergill, did not forsake him, for he gave him a letter of introduction to his brother, Dr. Fothergill, which secured him a life-long friend in that eminent man. Lettsom entered as a surgeon's dresser at St. Thomas's Hospital, which then numbered amongst its physicians the author of the '*Pleasures of Imagination*.' Great, however, was Lettsom's disappointment, to find in the poet whose work had beguiled his leisure hours, a supercilious and unfeeling man, whose conduct to patients was scandalously harsh, and to pupils cold and petulant.

Having completed his medical education, Lettsom went to Tortola with two objects, one to take possession of a little property left him by his father, and the other to perform a noble act of humanity, of which, to their eternal honour, the Society of Friends (of which Lettsom was a member) has furnished other examples: this was, to emancipate the fifty slaves who constituted, with a small portion of land, his patrimonial possession. "At this time," says his biographer, "he was not possessed of £50 in the world; but viewing the traffic in living blood as wicked and unlawful, he immediately emancipated them, and became a voluntary beggar at the age of 23!" The

blessing which maketh rich followed this act of conscientiousness, for, after practising in Tortola five years, he succeeded in amassing nearly £2000, part of which he gave to his mother, and with the rest returned to London, became a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, and commenced practice in 1770 under the auspices of Dr. Fothergill. He shortly after married a Miss Miers. The limits of this notice will not allow of our following him through the details of professional life. His correspondence gives ample proof how earnestly he laboured to promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures by every possible method; how numerous were the subjects to which for this purpose he devoted his attention; and how well he deserved Professor Marx's valuable designation of a "thoroughly honorable man."

The pamphlet on the 'Tea Tree,' to which allusion is made in the letter, appeared in 1772. It had formed the subject of his inaugural dissertation at the University of Leyden.

In 1776 he published 'Observations preparatory to the Use of Dr. Mayersbach's Medicines,' which went through two editions in the year. The second edition is ornamented with an engraving of the 'Water Doctor,' from an original picture of Teniers.

In 1778 he delivered an oration before the Medical Society of London, the subject of which was a sketch of the 'History of the Origin of Medicine.' It was printed, at the request of the Society, with various historical illustrations, forming a quarto book of 170 pages. As this work is the basis of Professor Marx's remarks in his letter to him, it may not be amiss to say a few words respecting it. The plan which he had formed of this history, of which the oration was only the first chapter, was one of a very extensive character, and which, unhap-

pily, want of leisure prevented his carrying out. He proposed to consider—

1. Medicine in general.
2. History of Discoveries in Medicine.
3. History of Benefactors to Medicine.
4. History of Arts and Sciences in general.

The work to be divided into periods, forming certain particular eras in medicine, and connected with some important circumstances in the general history of the world.

First Period.—To commence with the Creation, and end with the Trojan War; the period of *Natural and Fabulous Medicine*.

Second Period.—*Empiricism from Necessity*, to begin with the Trojan, and end with the Peloponnesian War.

Third Period.—*Dogmatism*, from Hippocrates to Serapion; namely, to the time of the destruction of Carthage, 146 years before Christ.

Fourth Period.—From Serapion to the birth of Christ, about the time of Themison.—*Professed Empiricism*.

Fifth Period.—From Themison to Galen.—*Methodism*.

Sixth Period.—From Galen to Paracelsus.—*Peripatetic Dogmatism*.

Seventh Period.—From Paracelsus to Harvey.—*Chemical Dogmatism*.

Eighth Period.—From Harvey to Boerhaave.—*Mechanical Dogmatism*.

Ninth Period.—From Boerhaave, who introduced a new system, which included all the others, to the present time.—*General Dogmatism*.

Dr. Lettsom continued to improve this work, on which he dwelt with much satisfaction to the end of his life.

To Dr. Lettsom the public are chiefly indebted for the establishment of those eminently beneficial institutions—

dispensaries for the sick and necessitous. It was in 1770 that he, assisted by several benevolent friends, succeeded in forming the General Dispensary, being the first of the kind instituted. In 1773 he was elected one of the physicians of the charity, and published a small, but excellent pamphlet, which did much to advance the cause. He also originated the Sea Bathing Infirmary of Margate.

In 1780 Dr. Lettsom lost his valued friend, the benevolent and learned Dr. John Fothergill, and to him, as to an old and intimate associate, and one thoroughly acquainted with the habits and opinions of the deceased, fell the office of becoming his biographer. He published a very interesting memoir of his friend, together with a complete collection of his works, and a selection from his correspondence. The benevolent character of Fothergill gave Dr. Lettsom an opportunity, which he zealously embraced, of enlarging on a subject which lay very near his heart, as his valuable letters testify, namely, the distresses of the poor.

To the fourth edition of the 'Life of Fothergill' Dr. Lettsom appended memoirs of Drs. Cuming, Cleghorn, and Russel, and Mr. Collinson, all of whom had been associates and friends of Dr. Fothergill. With Dr. Cuming Lettsom himself maintained a regular correspondence, and at the death of Dr. Cuming he purchased all his books, MSS., prints, and collections of natural objects. In 1786 Dr. Lettsom exerted himself to raise a fund towards erecting a statue to the memory of the philanthropist Howard. It would indeed lead us too far, and take up too much space, were we to enumerate all the benevolent projects which he either originated or promoted; one, however, must be selected, because it is mentioned by Professor Marx, namely, his efforts to obtain an honorable remuneration for the important discovery of Jenner.

For a considerable time Dr. Lettsom maintained the first practice in the city of London, and his professional emoluments were very great; from 1786 to 1800 being not less than from £5000 to £12,000 annually.

He died on the 1st of November, 1815, and was interred in the Friends' burial-ground, Little Coleman street, Bunhill row, on the 7th of the same month. Although the funeral took place at an early hour, several hundreds of the poor flocked round the grave, and manifested by their tears their deep sense of the loss they had sustained.

He was prosperous, beloved, and respected; his influence in his age was great, and that influence was steadily exerted to promote the physical comfort and social welfare of his fellow-creatures. Though not learned himself, he was a liberal patron of learning in others, and the constant friend of science and literature. His Life, by Pettigrew, is a worthy tribute to his memory, and his Letters a lasting memorial to his fame.

LETTER TO DR. JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM.

“ You published a discourse upon the state of medical science previous to the Trojan war,* but I do not address this letter merely to the historian (a distinction, indeed, which you did not appropriate to yourself) so much as to the thoroughly honorable man whom I have learned to know from your collected works, and especially from your biography of Fothergill. With such an one it is best to discuss the importance of medical narratives.

“ Undoubtedly you had in your lifetime larger demands made on your forbearance and moderation, so that I trust I may reckon on an indulgent hearing. You said yourself that in the external world, as in the world of thought and feeling, there must be an endless diversity; as there are not two leaves on a tree quite alike, and yet we cannot pronounce of either that it is the most perfect, so it is in human opinions, especially with regard to the heart, for you reckoned up no less than three thousand† religious fraternities (or sects).‡ §

* History of the Origin of Medicine, an Oration, London, 1778.

† Observations on Religious Persecution, London, 1800.

‡ Obs. preparatory to the Use of Dr. Mayersbach's Medicines, ib. 1776; second edition, with an engraving of the “Water Doctor,” from Teniers.

§ [*Note of Translator.*—The passage in Lettsom's Life here referred to, is as follows: “Were I a legislator, I should like to have in my jurisdiction all the three thousand different kinds of religion that are said to be in the world. To see the various ways of addressing the Father of all, must be a glorious sight to a pious mind, and must I think, be acceptable to the Author of our being. The constitutions of men are as unlike as their faces, and the bent of thought as dissimilar; but when all, though various in opinion, unite in the great act of adoration, the multiplicity of religions appears to augment the solemnity and the grandeur of it.” Vol. ii, p. 57.]

“ You contended for true medicine* against quackery, and for the recognition of great medical services; for instance, for Jenner’s discovery of the cowpox inoculation.† Might I be allowed to express myself figuratively I would say, as you were born on a little island‡ of the vast Atlantic Ocean, so your soul and your house remained a quiet home of pure manly duty amidst the ocean of London strife.

“ Such a man has other claims than those of mere learning, to a seat in the great Amphictyonic Council of mankind. I at least feel myself compelled to have recourse to you on some topics relating to the composition of medical history.

“ Polybius says,§ ‘ As a living being deprived of eyes becomes useless, so is history deprived of truth a useless narrative.’ To ascertain truth, however, is as difficult as to speak it. As a child believes a fairy tale, so does the ordinary reader believe what histories recount; but the

* Hints designed to promote Beneficence, Temperance, and Medical Science. 1798.

† Immediately after the House of Commons had voted £10,000 as a national reward for the discovery and extension of vaccination, Lettsom wrote to Jenner: “ I was truly chagrined on seeing the niggardly reward voted by the house; and had double that sum been asked, it would have been granted; however, as an individual, I am not disposed to stop here, but immediately to set on foot a subscription that should invite every potentate and person in Europe, America, and Asia, because every avenue of the globe has received, or may receive, your life-preserving discovery. This subscription should not be merely for you, but it should be a fund, the interest of which should be for ever devoted to the name of Jenner.” (Baron’s Life of Jenner, vol. i, p. 517.)

‡ Little Vandyke, near Tortola.

§ Hist. I, c. 14, § 6, ed. Schweighäuser. Ωσπερ γὰρ ζῶον των ὤψεων, ἀψαιρεθείσων’ ἀχρειοῦται τὸ ὄλον· οὕτως ἐξ ἱστορίας ἀναίρεθείσης τῆς ἀληθείας, το καταλειπομενον αὐτῆς ἀνωφελές γίγνεται ὑῆγημα.

critical inquirer, on the contrary, is satisfied if he finds only an instructive or even an entertaining narration.

“ In medicine one would think it cannot be so difficult to lay down incontestable facts, since it has not to do with the complicated threads of events having reference to the ordinary objects and passions of mankind, but to develop notorious and openly published discoveries and opinions; still they pertain to the human mind, and as such partake of its good or evil peculiarities. Truly also should that kind of testimony that is included in the history of medicine be expected to be credible, since for it even inanimate objects speak—for we possess the memoirs of a stick* which accompanied many eminent physicians during their career—all such means, however, are no helps or guarantees of truth.

“ How it fares with authentic information, autobiographies show. Who should be able to relate his own experience more correctly than he who has been the subject of it; and who is more credible than the writer, if he is to be esteemed a man of integrity? Ought we to allow ourselves to start doubts in this kind of narration?

“ One of the most credible men in respect of character was certainly John Albert Henry Reimarus. You will know him, perhaps, as the man who first proposed *belladonna* to widen the pupil of the eye,† not so well his

* The author of the interesting work, ‘*The Gold-headed Cane*,’ London, 1828, is apparently Mac Michael.

† He himself says upon this subject (see his ‘*Life*,’ published by himself, Hamburg, 1814), “An incident by which the juice of *belladonna* was accidentally injected, and produced an increased palsy of the iris, or widening of the pupil, suggested to me that it would be useful to widen it by this means, before operating for cataract, as thereby the whole extent of the lens would be discovered, and the instrument used with more precision.” Daries, to whom the above-mentioned proposal was made known, laid it before the public in his ‘*Dissertation*,’ which appeared at Leipsic, 1776. (See Baldinger’s *Syllogisms*, vol. ii, p. 58.)

father, formerly rector of Weimar University, who published a remarkable book on animal instinct.

“ Our above-named collegian, like yourself, took a high degree of interest in ordinary human relations and useful inventions ; he it was who took measures against lightning* and against the compulsory restrictions of corporate bodies,† and sought to employ his Hamburgh patriotism, especially in diffusing instruction on the requisites for a well-regulated civil constitution.‡

“ This unblamable man, who challenged for himself the praise§ that not even in jest he had permitted himself to speak or to write a falsehood, thus writes in his eighty-fourth year :|| ‘ The French have been compelled to quit Hamburgh. I am returned to my native town, desolated indeed, but still freed, and am embraced by many friends.’

“ Would not any one believe that this was to be taken literally?

“ But in the postscript of another¶ to this declaration

* On lightning conductors. “ I showed,” he expresses himself, “ that lightning follows the track of metal without deviating to any other body, and thus confirmed Franklin’s idea, that this electrical peculiarity might be made use of for the protection of our buildings. As early as the year 1769 a lightning conductor was erected on the tower of St. James’s, at Hamburgh.”

† Inquiry into the supposed Necessity of an authorized College of Medicine, and of coercive Medical Restrictions, 1781. He says : “ I do not consider it advantageous. Commands and prohibitions have always been impediments to the progress of art. All powerful remedies have been discovered by accident, and by unscientific persons. A circumscribed rule, imposed by a corporate body, and prescribed laws, I hold to be improper, and disadvantageous to a noble art.”

‡ Sketch of a general State Instruction for future Citizens, Hamburgh, 1803.

§ Life.

|| The same, p. 95.

¶ Sieveking’s—the same, p. 103.

we find : ‘ He saw in his biography his return* as vouchsafed to him, and spoke of it as actually occurring. Providence decided otherwise. In this matter a friendly hand is necessary to correct his own manuscript.’

“ As children, without a thought of deceit, in order to practise themselves in speaking and thinking, relate something as happened which they have not experienced, many writers employ their pen only in this manner. What they represent is less the mature fruit of laborious inquiry, in order to obtain by great efforts the approbation of a few intelligent judges, than something hastily thrown out to produce a transient impression of pleasure or surprise upon the general public. And thus the *historical* borders upon the *hysterical*. The deep work of a laborious collector is used by the writer to furnish a brilliant copy. He wishes his work to resemble a foundling hospital, where no child can point out its parent, but it resembles instead an orphan asylum, where each bears about him the marks of a poor and destitute origin.

“ An historical chronicle becomes, by incorrectness, a slander of long continuance ; it is in this manner like the poison tree, in which most of the constituent parts resemble more innocent plants, but the little difference in the anthers stamp it as the fatal Upas.

“ A superficial historian not only betrays the public trust, but also multiplies errors, which propagate themselves like hereditary diseases.

“ He deserves to be suspected who, before he commits himself to some general undertaking, does not test his ability by some special steady inquiry. Men are not only born poets, generals, and physicians, but also historians. No one is like a king appointed to government by hereditary right ; and every one must, by able achievements,

* From Rantzau.

prove that he is worthy to float above the Individual, and grapple with the Whole.

“To what is it owing that we possess no historical Lexicon, to fix permanently the expressions to the intentions of their times ?

“As times alter, and men with them, so also ideas and their signs. The word *to right* meant, formerly, to procure for every one his right. In Pliny and Celsus, *amylum* is called fine meal, in Apicius, a sauce ; a water doctor was once the term for a urine inspector, now for an hydropathist. The rat (*rattus*) was unknown to the Greeks and Romans, only the *ratz* dormouse (*glis esculentis*) was known to them as an article of food, which they fattened in preserves (*gliraria*). We no longer prescribe balsam to drop into wounds, but use it as an expectorant. To express the greatest speed we were accustomed to speak of pressing forwards *remis et velis* ; but what is this speed compared with our present steam-ships and railroads ? What trouble must one take to trace out the species of a plant which has been described by early observers ? The researches of Stork, on the aconite in 1762, are of no use till we are aware that his species is the *cammarum*.

“The historian who advances with time through chronology must do this with truth, but also in a right manner ; for even decennial periods sometimes serve for an experiment. In the French Revolution the tactics of the Allies were good, but their strategy worthless ; the Sans Culottes conquered, because they lost no time about formalities ; there was no stability in their affairs, but neither was there any delay in their actions.

“When history is written from the impulse of natural talent, it will be composed more for thought and instruction, than for events and authors. It is not necessary that a writer, in order to procure authenticity for his facts, should be as dry as his pounce.

“That which charms our soul to sympathy, and fixes our interest, is the perception and the proof of the manner in which mankind, either in their collective mass, or in their individual branches, have advanced in the knowledge of the better, noble, and more perfect ; how every step of their seeking, longing, and striving resembles the knots in the stem of a plant which, one following the other, become ever closer together till the fragrant flower is developed. The exhibition of one of life’s sparks flashing out of antiquity, kindles the genial warmth in our own bosoms to a brighter glow ; whilst the mere sight of the dead husks and limbs of the past, affects us with a cold shudder. So confront the wanderer in Egyptian plains, the pyramids, those stony pillars of the waste, once the signs of an active existence. Meanwhile the mere effusions of ideality will not suffice in history ; it needs a firm and broad basis.

“He who does not withdraw himself for many years into independent deep study, exercising a high degree of self-denial, so as to sink himself entirely in his object, will never create anything original. With the diving-bell of indefatigable industry must he bring up hidden treasures from the sunken vessel, and with a true Moses’ staff of penetrating judgment strike out flowing fountains from the rocks of recorded facts.

“It is to use the fountain when we appropriate the knowledge of the best of all times, dealing exclusively with the models and masterpieces of literature, perfectly acquainting ourselves with them on every side, and avoiding what they merely prepared for others. The gleanings of the stubble belongs to the poor after the harvest. Bad and inferior writers are in like manner shallow springs, which shine in the distance like fresh fountains, but when we would draw from them, they are quickly dried up.

“He who drudges over history is no more an historian than he who collects together mere notices of books and

old editions is a literary man. There is needed in this department an enlightened command of the materials collected, a free independent judgment, and an impartiality as to character. There is a great difference between him who writes a dispatch and him who transcribes it.

"Every one knows that, since the year 1817, hundreds of pamphlets and larger works have appeared on the cholera, which, in a very small degree, correspond with the requirement of Thucydides 'perpetual lastingness.' Should any one, after some centuries, collect together the existing pamphlets of these authors, would the cause of science and truth be thereby served? The number of writings in which clear conceptions of that disease, authentic facts, and certain leading reasonings are laid down, is astonishingly small.

"According to the proverb, *quisquis præsimitur bonus*, every one who has printed is esteemed honorable in the book world, but an honorable author, who never permits himself to garble or insert portions of another's property without open acknowledgment, is not very common. Cuvier* says of Corvisart on that head, he gave a proof of noble magnanimity, because he translated 'Avenbrugger's Dissertation,' instead of giving its contents to the world as his own discovery.†

"The works of him who merely strives after a name, unembarrassed about the intrinsic worth of his performance, resemble those winter brocoli at Rome which smell of the

* Eloges, Hist. III, p. 372. "La forme donnée à cet ouvrage doit être remarquée comme la preuve d'une noble générosité. M. Corvisart y immolait sa gloire."

† Corvisart expresses himself thereupon (in his translation and correction): "Je pouvais sacrifier le nom d'Avenbrugger à ma propre vanité; je ne l'ai pas voulu; c'est lui, c'est sa belle et légitime découverte que je veux faire revivre." (See also Pariset, Eloge de Laennec Hist. des Membres de l'Acad. Royale de Méd., tom. ii.)

manure, by means of which an indiscreet gardener has forced them into unseasonable maturity.

“It is not more indispensable to have competent talents one’s self, than it is to estimate conscientiously the talents of others. The old proverb ‘throw not a stone into the fountain from which thou hast drunk,’ does not go far enough, for the benefit of an idea ready discovered for us, for a noble feeling excited, for important instruction furnished, demands our sincere gratitude, and to show it both in word and deed is an obligation and respect due to the author.*

“You will allow that every physician is so far an historian that he must note the history of disease and its treatment. From the past he must form his conception of the present, and out of many individual facts he must form an image of the probable. He also well knows that the *opera omnia* of a man are not his best; there are many which cannot be too soon got rid of and forgotten. Many are accustomed to invest with full biographical dignity all the relics of childhood, even to preserve the dried umbilical cord and the genuine infantile wrappings, as if from such mum-

* On this point Walter Savage Landor (see his ‘Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men,’) speaks admirably. (London, 1826, 8, vol. i, p. 74.) “If the ear is satisfied; if at one moment a tumult is aroused in the breast, and tranquillised at another, with a perfect consciousness of equal power exerted in both cases; if we rise up from the perusal of the work with a strong excitement to thought, to imagination, to sensibility; above all, if we sat down with some propensities toward evil, and walk away with much stronger toward good, in the midst of a world which we never had entered, and of which we never had dreamed before, shall we perversely put on again the old man of criticism, and deny that we have been conducted by a most beneficent and most potent genius? Nothing proves to me so manifestly in what a pestiferous condition are its lazarettos, as when I observe how little has been objected against those who have substituted words for things and how much against those who have reinstated things for words.”

mies of an early age the character and aims of the full-grown man could be gathered.

“From a similar reverence for antiquity springs the zeal of many editors of celebrated works in collecting together every shred of what an author has written. They do not consider that the contents of such complete works are, in fact, *incomplete*, because they disturb and unsettle the comprehensive idea which one already entertains of a writer’s genius and labours.

“To prevent personality I have sought to avoid all near allusions, at the risk, however, of becoming thereby unintelligible.

“Since, nevertheless, in your world of shadows our literary movements are probably portrayed as in a camera obscura, you are certainly in a position conveniently to observe with a glance what a weak son of earth can scarcely make out with all the united powers of his eyes, body, and mind.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO DR. LETTSOM.

The principal topic of this letter is history—medical history and biography,—and the qualifications necessary in a good historical writer. Many valuable and interesting observations are interspersed throughout. Of the history of medicine Professor Marx says, that it is still a desideratum, and on this subject there are some important suggestions in the work of Dr. Simon. After stating his opinion that the thoughtful study of history would be the best preservative against medical scepticism, he adds, “On this account we cannot too much encourage those works whose object is this important study. But to attain it something is needed beyond that learning which is but Galen and Hippocrates in the twentieth dilution. In order that the history of medical tradition may preserve over the mind that happy influence of which we are speaking, his-

tory ought to be treated according to the method which M. Dezeimeris has briefly hinted in his '*Lettres Historiques*,' but which, unfortunately, he only applied to certain isolated points of science. Up to the present time the historians of medical science, Freind, Leclerc, Schulze, Bernier, Ackermann, and Kurt Sprengel himself, who lays down formally the opinion that the history of medicine ought to be written in chronological order, all the historians of the science have, in fact, followed this order. But the plan is a vicious one; it leads to bibliography and biography; it leaves out a great number of truths which find no place in theories; it does not write the real intrinsic history of that science, which according to the expression of the learned librarian of the Faculty of Paris, marches across the succession of time. This is, however, the end which ought to be proposed; it is necessary that the historian should make it his object to show us the science in its progressive evolution, that every truth disengaged from the clouds which obscure it should show itself triumphant, and set free from all connexion with error. The medical man who should accomplish this grand work would, without doubt, render to art and science a most important service. It would be the precise inventory of the real property of each. Every theoretical conception would be obliged to conform itself to these primary truths, under pain of being suspected of error, or of being at once rejected as false. The most subordinate understandings, assimilating by an easy labour these truths divested of all the dress of human logic, would be protected for ever from that superficial scepticism into which they of all others are in danger of falling. Science would progress, art would progress, for neither has reached its climax, but they would at least be preserved from those perilous crises in which they seem to disappear."

Marx says every physician is so far an historian that he

must note the history of disease and its treatment, and as this remark leads to an interesting subject, that of the importance of recording cases, we shall make a few observations—1. On the value of such a record. 2. On the manner in which it should be written.

There has often been reason to deplore that much of the most valuable practical knowledge has been lost to the profession and to mankind, by the disinclination or neglect of its possessors to put it into a written form. If we recall the memory of some of the most successful practitioners this country has produced, and inquire what they have left behind as the enduring fruits of their experience, our inquiry will be vain. The result of years of arduous labour lies buried in the tomb. It is true that a great portion of the medical knowledge which is acquired by experience cannot be communicated; this can only be attained by cultivating the faculty of observation, but much still remains which, were it constantly recorded, would considerably advance the progress of medical science. Those whose position and extensive practice would enable them to make the most valuable contributions to the history of medical science, are precisely the men who are under the strongest temptations to neglect doing so. The active duties of professional life leave but little time for medical writing, and it requires considerable self-sacrifice to sit down to the desk after the labours of the day are over. Yet we have had bright examples of industry amongst medical men, not, indeed, always exercised on strictly professional subjects, yet serving to show how time may be husbanded. Mason Good, as is well known, composed his translation of Lucretius whilst walking in the streets of London, and Lettsom wrote much in his carriage, by which means (as he required daily three pair of horses to enable him to get through his visits) he was, doubtless, enabled to achieve a great amount of

work. The late Dr. Hope was an eminent instance of great industry, carried, however, it is to be feared, to an extent which tended to shorten his life, and thereby to undo in one respect what it did in another, but it is not required for medical men to injure their health by excessive application. What we would recommend is simply that they should keep a faithful and conscientious record of the results of their own practice, and thus contribute to enlarge the boundaries of a science the evidences of which are essentially cumulative.

As to the second point, the manner of doing this — the first and most indispensable qualification is *truthfulness*. When cases are related in a loose and careless manner, without a distinct enumeration of those attendant circumstances which accompany the progress of a disease and modify its character, they lose all their individuality, interest, and value. Unintentional errors of this kind are often committed by medical men of sanguine temperament, who, when advocating some new plan of treatment which they have adopted, collect together a number of cases thus loosely recorded, and which are apparently, although not really, similar in character, in order to prove the efficacy of the plan they wish to promulgate; the result is that when others attempt to follow the same course of treatment they are disappointed. Our medical journals contain many cases of this description. The first essentials, then, we repeat, are correctness, accuracy, and fulness of detail. “The physician,” says Dr. Simon, “who knowingly in his writings alters the facts which he has observed, falsifies, for the sake of his own theories, the traditions of science, and substitutes for a judicious induction of facts the interested lies of sophistry, is guilty of a great crime. How many a hard-working and obscure practitioner may hereafter arise who can snatch but a few moments daily to devote to study, and whose confidence

will be an easy prey to the positive assertions of imposture! Even the physician whose more enlarged mind enables him to undertake the labour of a rigorous criticism before he receives the assertions of a book or a journal, may not always succeed in unmasking falsehood and detecting truth." It should always be borne in mind that not merely by the invention of false circumstances, but by the suppression of little incidental particulars is truth betrayed. Half the truth is often a lie, and nowhere is this more frequently the case than in medical narrations. "It is especially on therapeutics," says Simon, "that this kind of unfaithfulness has exercised the most pernicious influence. When we consider the instability of this part of the science as history represents it to us, in what respects those remedies which are a little out of the great methods which time has irrevocably consecrated, it is impossible not to perceive that next to inaccuracy of observation, the cause which has most powerfully contributed to keep up the confusion which prevails on this point is the *keeping back of negative facts.*"

But where there is no designed unfairness, no desire to make facts serve a particular end, there may often be a great deal of practical misconception, owing to a confused method of narration; and, therefore, another important qualification in a medical historian (and such, in a restricted sense, is every one who records a case and gives it to the public) is a clear, a perspicuous style, the more simple the language the better. It was said, we believe, by Talleyrand, that the use of language is to conceal one's meaning, and to the wily politician it has, doubtless, often been a convenient tool for this purpose; but the honest medical writer will be chiefly anxious that it should convey, and convey clearly, his meaning. Gregory says, "The language in which science is to be communicated should be simple, perspicuous, and divested of all artificial orna-

ments." This is more especially true of the *narration of facts*, and especially of facts so important as those with which the medical writer has to do; it is not meant that all graces of composition, all the fire of imagination, all the pathos of feeling, should be rigorously banished from scientific or from medical works; but on this field we cannot now enter.

In estimating the usefulness of recording cases, we ought not to pass over its beneficial influence on the mind of the practitioner himself. The calm reviewal of those cases, over which we have anxiously watched, is the grand means of preparing for future usefulness, enabling us to detect any error which may have hung about our diagnosis or after treatment, and confirming our confidence in what has really been of value; this is well expressed by Percival as follows: "At the close of every interesting and important case, especially when it has terminated fatally, a physician should trace back, in calm reflection, all the steps which he has taken in the treatment of it. This review of the origin, progress, and conclusion of the malady, of the whole curative plan pursued, and of the particular operation of the several remedies employed, as well as of the doses and periods of time in which they were administered, will furnish the most authentic documents, on which individual experience can be formed. But it is in a moral view that the practice is here recommended, and it should be performed with most scrupulous impartiality. Let no self-deception be permitted in the retrospect; and if errors, either of omission or commission, be discovered, it behoves that they should be brought fairly and fully to the mental view. Regrets may follow, but criminality will thus be obviated; for good intentions and the imperfection of human skill, which cannot anticipate the knowledge that events alone disclose, will sufficiently justify what is past, provided the failure be made conscientiously

subservient to future wisdom and rectitude in professional conduct.”*

Such a register—how valuable would it be! If neatly and consecutively written, it would be a book of reference to its possessor of continual interest and value; from it might be selected such cases as, from time to time, might be of sufficient importance to warrant publication, and should the recorder attain to such a degree of professional eminence as to make his name the property of posterity, such a record would furnish to his biographer materials of the most precious description.

Though, on account of the extensive application of this particular aspect of medical history, we have devoted to it our chief attention, it is not because we are insensible to the value of medical biography in other views. It is a species of writing eminently useful, especially to the young medical man, showing to him, in a striking manner, the difficult and gradual ascent by which others have reached the summit of their profession, and administering both caution, stimulus, and encouragement, exhibiting, at one time an Astley Cooper receiving only £60 per annum, and John Hunter struggling for a livelihood. Medical biography also may tend to reconcile the more advanced practitioner to labours perhaps but ill-requited, when he sees a Charles Bell labouring for the future without care for self-interest, or to check, if successful, his self-exaltation, as he compares his life with the lives of Lettsom and Fothergill, or Boerhaave.

Allusion is made in this letter to Lettsom's determined opposition to quackery. It is well known that, about the year 1806, he entered into a serious collision with the reigning quacks, wrote anonymous articles in the 'Medical Journal,' and had a law-suit with Brodum, the proprietor

* Medical Ethics.

of the Nervous Cordial, which he was obliged to compromise in a somewhat inglorious manner. Brodum was afterwards summoned before the College of Physicians, and ordered to drop the title of doctor, and to desist from taking fees ; but he contrived ingeniously to elude both requisitions.

Of the quackery which is practised by non-medical persons merely as a speculation in trade, and which takes its place side by side with Rowland's Macassar, it is not our purpose here to speak, further than to express our regret that the legislature should sanction and indorse the many hurtful nostrums sold as patent medicines ; but on quackery, as practised in the medical body, we must make a few remarks.

Of this quackery there are two kinds, both of which are unworthy the dignity of a learned profession. The first of these is the open advocacy of charlatanry, when the medical practitioner, outraging conscience, judgment, and integrity, avowedly attempts to live upon the credulity of the public, a line of conduct so evidently unprincipled, that he who practises it at once loses the confidence of his colleagues, and is virtually expelled from the ranks of the profession.*

But there is another sort of empiricism which may more truly be called professional quackery ; when a man, for the sake of gaining practice, takes up the fashionable folly of

* Sir Benjamin Brodie, in his 'Introductory Discourse on the Duties and Conduct of Medical Students and Practitioners,' after speaking of the baseness of forsaking the honorable path of professional enterprise for that of quackery, says : "Your future experience of the world, if you use it properly, will but confirm you in these sentiments ; for you will discover that of those who strive to elevate themselves by unworthy artifices, it is only a very small proportion who obtain even that to which they are contented to aspire, and that the great majority are altogether disappointed, living to be the contempt of others, and especially so of their own profession, and, for the most part, ending their days in wretchedness and poverty."

the day, or adopts some peculiar plan of treatment, not because convinced of its utility, but for the sake of producing a sensation in the public mind. There are many degrees of this kind of quackery, but all of them are utterly unworthy of an ingenuous honest mind, and derogatory to the character of a man of science and education. Man, indeed, is a fallible being ; he may be led away by specious theories, and may err in judgment even when honest in intention, and thus, doubtless, many of the medical advocates of mesmerism, homœopathy, and hydropathy are themselves deceived ; yet, with the largest amount of charity, we must think that some at least of the adherents of those doctrines have embraced them for selfish purposes, possibly seeking in them those rewards which some misconduct or deficiency have prevented their realizing in the regular practice of their profession. There are men who are apparently incapable of just reasoning, who look at every subject in a one-sided manner, and whose minds are really incapable of entertaining two ideas at the same time ; such men cannot comprehend the maxim of *post hoc non propter hoc* ; but when they see patients recovering, after a course of hydropathic or homœopathic treatment, hastily conclude that their recovery is *in consequence* of such treatment, and immediately rush into the ranks of its upholders. Such men we both pity and blame ; we pity their weakness of mind, we blame their haste and carelessness in forming a judgment. But those who compromise judgment and principle in their desire to become rich, and determine to sail with the stream, and make their profit in the public delusion, deserve nothing but contempt and execration, ready as they are to sacrifice the health and lives of their fellow-creatures to their own selfish interests. In proportion to the degree of truth, which is at the foundation of any system, is the probability that its adherents may be honest in their attachment to it ; and in this

respect hydropathy has the advantage over its contemporary, homœopathy, since cold water, air, exercise, and attention to diet are powerful remedial agents.* The *empiricism* consists in investing its treatment with the character of an all but universal remedy. Sir Benjamin Brodie well characterized it when he said that, "all that is true in it is not new, and all that is new in it is not true."

The causes of disease in the human frame are so many and complicated, and the shades which disease exhibits so various, that it is obvious that a *universal remedy* is a suspicious pretension, and one which the light of science is likely to scatter to the winds.

There is in homœopathy a still plainer character of absurdity. The enlightened Frenchman, Dr. Simon, has spoken of it with just condemnation. "Homœopathy," says he, "is, in our judgment, scepticism. Without doubt this scepticism, which makes of medicine a science of divination, of Pagan augury, ought to be stigmatised as a jugglery unworthy at once of those who employ it and those who are imposed on by it. Is it not treason to the dignity of man, an insult to the nobleness of his nature to treat him

* In making this admission, the writer would on no account be understood to speak favorably of hydropathy as a *system*. As such it is fraught, in his opinion, with danger. The constitutions of individuals vary, and diseases vary in their origin, nature, and course, requiring varieties of treatment. Many persons looking upon the cold-water cure as chiefly a system of hygiene, have an opinion that it is at least *harmless*. But this opinion can only arise from ignorance. The *crisis* so much talked of, and so anxiously watched for, is in fact a state of poverty of the blood, artificially induced by the imbibition of large quantities of water, and by other means; and such a state of the system, in which the vital functions are imperfectly performed, is a fertile source of organic disease, especially of diseases of the heart and blood-vessels. Many, we fear, who have been under this treatment, and have had the balance of the constitution disturbed, will hereafter pay the penalty in the manifestation of now latent disease.

like a child, and to employ a lying science industriously elaborated, like a coral to lull him asleep in suffering and death. Pagan societies might well have such sciences and revere them, but such a cheat is not allowable at the present day."

If it be asked what is the boundary which separates the regular practice of the profession from empiricism, we would say, in few words, *whatever tends to lower the practice of medicine as a science* partakes of the latter character, and this includes the publishing of works written in a popular form, recommending some plan of treatment which can only be employed by the author himself. We hold it a fair and legitimate line of conduct for a young man to write and publish with a view to introduce himself to notice, since medical reputation is a fair object of pursuit; but then let him seek to obtain this by means of what is really true and valuable, and worked out by study and experience, not by some novel and specious doctrine, merely set forth to catch the suffrages of the unthinking.

With respect to the recommendation and sanction of quack medicines, we consider it unworthy of the medical character. They should be systematically discountenanced by the profession.

Dr. Percival says, "the use of quack medicines should be discouraged by the faculty as disgraceful to the profession, injurious to health, and often destructive of life." He further says, "no physician or surgeon should dispense a secret nostrum, whether it be his invention or exclusive property, for if it be of real efficacy, the concealment of it is inconsistent with beneficence and professional liberality: and if mystery alone give it value and importance, such craft implies either disgraceful ignorance or fraudulent avarice."

This is a most important rule, and the physician who violates it forfeits the immunities and privileges of his posi-

tion, which he holds on the understanding of laying his science open to the benefit of his patient. And we cannot forbear withholding our meed of praise to the disinterested conduct of Dr. Brown, the propounder of the Brunonian doctrine, when lying in the King's Bench prison for a debt of £100, without any prospect of relief. His bookseller, Murray, applied to him, and offered him a sum of money if he would allow him to sell a nostrum under his name, but Brown rejected the proposal with disdain. The absurd plan of paying the general practitioner for his skill in the form of medicine has rather complicated the question in his case, and afforded one ground amongst many for its speedy abolition. It may sometimes happen that patients removing from a place, and continuing for a considerable space of time to take one particular form of medicine, might desire to have the prescription in their own possession, and in such a case the general practitioner ought to be fairly remunerated for his prescription, and ought not to hesitate to give it.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF NICHOLAS TULPIUS.

Nicholas Tulp, a physician and magistrate of Amsterdam, was born in that city the 2d of October, 1594. He assumed the name of *Tulp*, in reference to a *tulip* carved over the front of his paternal mansion. He began by practising surgery, then medicine, and reflected honour on these professions by his personal qualities. He founded at Amsterdam the College of Medicine, and delivered there for a considerable time anatomical lectures. In 1622 the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens conferred on him the offices of counsellor and sheriff, and in 1672 he commemorated by a public entertainment, the fiftieth year of his magistracy, during which time he had been four times elected burgomaster, a circumstance which has been transmitted to posterity by a medal, which may be seen in the 'Medallic History of the Low Countries,' by Van Loon, vol. iii, p. 64; and in the 'Numismatic Recreations of J. D. Kochler,' Part xiii, p. 309. The magistracy of Tulpius was exercised in difficult and trying conjunctures, brought on partly by the ambition of the Stadtholder, partly by the war which Louis XIV declared against Holland in 1672. Tulp gave proofs of his dexterity as a negociator in the former crisis (1650), and signalized himself by manly energy in the latter. The inscription on his medal runs:

"Vires ultra sortemque senectæ."

He died the 12th of September, 1674. Van Loon has erroneously placed his death in 1679.

His works are as follows: 'Observationes Medicæ,' in 12mo, with plates. An edition in the Dutch language appeared simultaneously; it went through five editions, the first of which was in 1641, and the last in 1716. A. S. Van der Voorst has enriched the latter with a biographical notice. The first editions of these 'Observations,' only contained three books. That of 1672, printed at the Elzevir press, contains some additions. The 'Observations,' which amount to the number of 228, are followed by 70 'Monita medica,' in the style of the 'Aphorisms of Hippocrates.' This inconsiderable volume would have sufficed by its merit to immortalise its author. He had adopted, as his symbol, a lighted lamp with this device, "Aliis inserviando consumor." Louis Wolzogen has celebrated the memory of Tulp in a funeral oration. Amongst the portraits which remain of him must be mentioned a picture of Rembrandt's, preserved in the Theatrum Anatomicum, of the city of Amsterdam. He is represented giving an anatomical lesson, and surrounded by seven persons of note at the period. Monsieur de Frey engraved it in aquatint in 1798.*

* Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne, Paris, 1827.

LETTER TO NICHOLAS TULPIUS.

“ Whether I have fully accomplished the wish of the editor of the sixth edition of your ‘Observations’ to give one’s self day and night to their reiterated perusal* can only be ascertained by a rigorous examination. I ought not to be reproached with incredulity if I pause over some singular things contained in them as over corner-stones since you yourself remark in your letter to your son that what you detailed to him were things perfectly true, indeed, but very extraordinary.† Every one does not find milk in blood instead of serum,‡ and a woman, who during her pregnancy consumed 1400 herrings, is at least as marvellous as her child who, immediately on its birth, longed for and cried after herrings.§

“ You have satisfied me that a physician has a wide sea to navigate, where there are as many shallows as diseases, and as many reefs as opinions.|| Among your admonitions I remarked especially those of respect for the powers of Nature.¶

* N. Tulpii, *Observationes Medicae*. Lugd. Bat. 1739, 8. *Praefatio editoris*: “ Ut diurna, nocturnaque versemini manu, et ex decies lecto relectoque libello, voluptatem, utilitatem et verae eruditionis augmentum percipiatis, vehementer oro.”

† Ad petrum Tulpium filium: “ a communi usu sejugata, attamen verissima.”

‡ Lib. i, cap. 58. “ Loco seri innatabat sanguini, licet laudabili et rite coagulato albissimum lac: nec odore, nedum sapore vel tantillum a lacte vaccino discrepans.”

§ Lib. ii, cap. 24. “ Praegnans, edens mille quadringentos haleces. Infans, cum necdum posset verbis, expetierit tamen ejulatu, haleces.”

|| Ad filium: “ Amplum ac spatiosum est, in quo navigamus, aequor. Et in illo tot propemodum vada, quot morbi, et tam frequentes scopuli, quam scopi.”

¶ *Monita Medica*, xl, p. 387. “ Optima vivendi lex, propria cujusque natura.”

“The fame which you obtained, not merely of preserving the lives of many, but that, also, without suffering,* I can thoroughly understand, since you, with the finest talents and the greatest zeal, seemed to live only for the good of your fellow-creatures, and your symbol was a burning light which consumes itself to serve others.†

“With such a practitioner one would willingly speak a word on the profession, and I may boldly do so without introduction, as you have now ceased to be a burgomaster of Amsterdam, and death, though it leaves untouched mental distinctions, levels all the distinctions of rank and station.

“It is another question, however, whether you, who have taken leave of the concerns of time since 1674, and especially of the medicine of that period, now concern yourself about that cultivated in the year 1844, whether, also, you trouble yourself about your former friends, and especially about physicians?

“Shall age take more interest in youth, which it knows not, than youth in age, of whose existence it scarce takes note?

“It is everywhere supposed that he who has a warm heart has a full bounding pulse; it is, however, proved with regard to stones that they are only able to retain the sun’s warmth for a moment, and soon again return to the temperature of surrounding objects. Pringle, the famous

* L. Wolzogen, *Oratio Funebris*, p. 12: “Numerari non possunt, qui Tulpio vitam, et quod vita majus est, sine dolore vitam referunt acceptam.”

† Wolzogen extolled the qualities which adorned Tulpus; for instance, p. 39: “Tenax recti, consilii certus, propositi constans. Patriae unice litare, illi se devovere, illi vitam impendere, sibi Deum suum et coelum reservare.” But then he adds: “Dum vixit, hoc symbolo usus est ardentis lucernae, aliis inserviando consumor: cum novissima meditaretur, illo altero, Deo frui, summum bonum.”

English staff physician, and the President of the Royal Society, who had studied in Edinburgh, left London in his old age to live over again his youth in the Scottish University, but he found another world there, and quietly returned to the metropolis.

“ You see that in this letter, as in a petition, I take care to arm myself beforehand with resignation; and I can do this the more easily as no fulfilment of a request is looked for. That especially which I have to say to you does not particularly concern yourself, but I turn to you as a patron and protector, and he who shall give me a satisfactory answer shall be considered as doing it in your name.

“ Those remarkable events which are known concerning you, lead us to suppose that your diary contained other things than the journal of that courtier who merely sets down the visits he pays and receives, or of that school-master who records the floggings he administers. A physician, if he cannot, like you, tell us of the deaf who understand with the eyes,* of the dumb who speak,† of men who breathe through the ear,‡ or of the influence of the full moon on ischuria,§ has sufficient opportunity to make his medical diary interesting by remarks on the treasures to be found in the investigation of nature by knowledge of mankind and of himself.

“ Many a one, indeed, who has borne the burden of the day, and returns home fatigued where, in the family circle, other claims than those of his profession often

* Lib. iv, 19. “Surdus visu verba intelligens.”

† Lib. i, 41. “Mutus loquens.”

‡ Lib. i, 35. “Respiratio per aures.”

§ Lib. ii, 43. ‘Ischuria Lunatica,’ p. 164, it is said: “Sed quid dicendum de Lunae consensu? quae, uti reliquis dominatur aquis, sic videtur quoque vim suam exseruisse in lotium hujus venerabilis Theologi.”

await him, and who is obliged to employ his leisure moments in making up his books, can scarcely contrive to keep an accurate account of what he has done and what he has not done, and to deduce general lessons from his experience. Nevertheless, to the extraordinary press of accumulated business succeed hours when he casts aside the pressing necessities of life, and seeks to rise above them, and to strengthen himself by reflection and comparison. It is said *scripta manent*, and what is committed to paper with inward efforts for the attainment of truth, for our own improvement, or the service of others, gratifies and teaches, not merely at the time, but grows imperceptibly into a shady fruit tree for our future use.

“Unconsciously day by day there is going on a restless effort to hold in a right course, to imprint a right character on all our words and actions, such as we may use and recognize in the calmness of the mind, to create for ourselves a satisfactory conviction, and to elevate our mental impressions into correct opinions.

“The physician must labour all the more to solve rising doubts, which those with whom he has to do are continually reviving. He learns the art of *questioning* before he learns that of answering. His diary furnishes him with the opportunity to bring this to a certain perfection, without the intercourse of conversation.

“In thus appealing to mere experience instead of a calm weighing of reasons, right is lost sight of; without the test of thought, the most valuable facts are not to be discriminated from the worthless. Your contemporary, Cornelius Decker, surnamed Bontekoe, from his father’s house sign, a *brindled cow*, was proof enough that mere experience does not alone suffice, for his recommendation daily to drink a hundred cups of tea, in order to live longer, healthier, and become wiser, certainly did not find support

from you. In your last communication,* before you conclude with the words “*Omnibus placere difficile*,” you say indeed much good of this beverage,† but are not carried away to exaggerated praises of it.

“You will not I hope be angry with me if I touch upon another subject, which you also may have in every respect been acquainted with, namely, medical visits.‡

“It is expected of a physician, and considered creditable to him, to be frequent in his visits. He must leave the tranquil region of thought and investigation to go out into the dwellings of men, the wards of the hospital, and to the sick chambers of individual patients. The wise Seneca§ and the pious Thomas a Kempis,|| are in favour of a secluded life. The physician is not, however, asked whether he considers it better to isolate himself, he must mingle with his fellow-men, and not merely with the gentleman at his dinner-table, or the lady in her evening assembly, but he must go to them at those times chiefly when they are least amiable.

“An accomplished man of the world, who in one day has paid a dozen visits of compliment, sighs over his heavy labour, and feels himself heartily tired of it; the medical

* Lib. iv, 40. “Herba Thée.”

† Lib. iv, p. 381. “Calefacit modice et adstringendo ventriculi osculum, refrenat coercetque usque eo vaporum, ad somnum conciliandum necessariorum, adscensum, ut nihil impedimenti offeratur illis, qui scribendo aut meditando satagunt noctes transigere.”

‡ Wolzogen, a. a. O. p. 13, says, “A primo dilicuto ad seram usque vesperam, sola interposita prandii horula, ipsam veluti circumferens salutem, auctor ejus et effector, indefessus totam urbem pererrabat.”

§ Epist. 7. “Quid tibi vitandum praecepue existimes? quaeris—turbam! Nunquam mores, quos extuli, refero. Recede in te ipse, quantum potes.”

|| De Imitatione Christi, cap. 20. “De amore solitudinis. Quoties inter homines fui, minor redii.”

man must, with alternate feelings of joy and sorrow, followed by anxiety, moved with care, go from house to house, up stairs, down stairs, like a postman ; the responsibility which presses on him he must not betray in his step, and if any one keeps him standing for a quarter of an hour in needless conversation at the door, in a thorough draught, he must be as quiet as a victim, lest he should appear unsympathising.

“It would be considered a great thing if a friend should make us a visit by night to warn or to help us, for months together it would be spoken of as a noble action ;—in the medical man, who hurries over the country in the middle of the night, at the danger of his life, it is considered nothing but his duty.

“Perhaps in no one is self-sacrifice so steadily kept in view as in the physician, since his object is always to do good,* whether his feelings impel him to it or not, and since according to his zeal and his success in doing good he is chiefly valued,† so there is nothing else left to him than to lay aside all false feeling and to bear with patience the yoke that is put upon him.

“Even he, whose ears are not as sensitive as an English lady’s, yet finds it necessary, not only with this sense but with all the others, to cultivate forbearance.

“Other men are ready for action when they can reckon on the result ; the physician alone must take in hand the matter without consideration, and yet no one is more

* “To do good should be the reigning motto of every physician.” (Obs. on the Character of a Physician. London, 1772, p. 75.)

† So writes Franklin, 1781, of the physician Fothergill. “If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavours and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has never existed.”—(Lettsom—Some Account of the late John Fothergill. London, 1783, p. 168.)

blamed for the result than he. Very often there is nothing to be said about action, since he has only been permitted to advise.

“How very little mortals are disposed and inclined to follow the best of counsel, you are now better able to see than at the time when you yourself sojourned upon earth.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO TULPIUS.

The primary topic taken up in the Letter to Tulpius is the subject of a medical diary. On this point we have already dwelt at length in our remarks on the Letter to Lettsom, but we must briefly recur to it in connexion with the present letter.

It is not any single case which constitutes the chief value of a medical diary, it is the whole, which tends to elicit truth. This is beautifully expressed by our author when he says, “Was mit innerer Anstrengung für die Erkenntniss der Wahrheit für die eigene Fortbildung und den Nutzen Anderer dem Papier anvertraut wird, das erfreut und belehrt nicht nur im Augenblick sondern es gestaltet sich unbemerkt zum schallenden Fruchtbaume für die Zukunft.”*

It is probable that those who have been most careful in the keeping of a diary have generally been most successful as practitioners. Dr. Marshall Hall says (see his ‘Practical Observations and Suggestions’), “In the midst of practice and of lectures I have allowed few days to elapse without recorded observation. This habit I regard as the test of a physician’s steadiness and industry.”

“A most important point for attaining this end,”

* What is committed to paper with inward efforts for the attainment of truth for our own improvement, or the service of others, gratifies and teaches not only at the time, but grows imperceptibly into a shady fruit tree for our future use.

(namely, the laying a foundation for success), "but rather too much neglected by our young practitioners, is keeping a *journal* of cases. When the noise of the day has terminated, and the silence of the evening invites to reflection, then the physician may yet devote a few hours of calm contemplation to his patients, write down the most important points in the history of a malady, the alterations which have occurred, his remarks and ideas on the origin and treatment of disease, the remedies prescribed, and reconsider the whole maturely. No evening must pass without paying this last duty to his patients, and thereby adding the keystone to his work."* This practice will be found the best remedy for a bad memory, the only refuge for a careless observer, and the surest guide to the conscientious and pains-taking man. It sharpens the intellect, and teaches the writer what Marx calls the art of questioning. He records a series of symptoms; he is naturally led to inquire whence each arises; his attention is attracted by anything unusual, and he learns to question Nature, and to deduce order from her variableness, and truth from the multitude of conflicting appearances. It is only by carefully watching and distinguishing disease that anything like perfection can be attained by the medical man.

"Practice," says Simon, "is to the medical man a continual education, which must progressively conduct his understanding to the highest development of which it is susceptible; even the uncertainties of the science stimulating the indolence of the mind, serve wonderfully to sustain it in the difficult path which it must traverse to arrive at this end. But if practice has lessons which must perfect the understanding, when this is capable of appreciating them, there is a moral quality which is itself only the tardy fruit of experience, and yet which in the medical man ought to precede it—this is prudence."

* Hufeland.

Nor need a diary be confined to strictly medical facts ; observations and reflections upon characters and events may sometimes strike the mind, which it would be at once interesting and improving to commit to paper. John Hunter, in his lectures, used to dwell much on the advantages every man derives from putting his thoughts into writing. "It resembles," he said, "a tradesman taking stock, without which he never knows either what he possesses or in what he is deficient."

From a medical diary the Letter to Tulpius proceeds to touch upon the important subject of medical visits.

These ought to be readily and cheerfully paid, not in the spirit of Hunter, who, being sent for to visit a patient whilst prosecuting his favorite studies, unwillingly laid aside his dissecting instruments, and said to his friend, Mr. Lynn, who was present, "Well, Lynn, I must go and earn this guinea, or I shall be sure to want it to-morrow ;" a temper of mind which, though exhibited by a great man, was inconsistent with his highest duties. "The physician," as Marx says, "is not asked whether he thinks it better to isolate himself, he must mingle with his fellow-men ;" and Simon beautifully says, "The first, the most essential duty of the medical man, who sees in his profession what it actually is, a real priesthood, is never to refuse the assistance of his beneficent art to him who comes to claim it, *provided, of course, that he can render his assistance without neglecting other duties equally urgent.* The philosopher," Simon continues, "who dedicates his life to the study of physics, of chemistry, of natural history, &c., may bury in his mind the knowledge which his studies have acquired ; society has no right to force him from the solitude in which he chooses to dwell. But the physician, on the contrary, is the man, the servant of all ; society claims as a right those services which the science which he studies enables him to render day by day."

In his visits he must exercise patience, avoiding a hurried demeanour or abrupt questions, and this especially regards the poor, for with the rich, practitioners are less likely to fall into these errors ; but it is unworthy the character of a professor of our noble art to be attentive, nay, even subservient to the rich, whilst he is overbearing and impatient towards the poor.

In the medical attendant and the minister of religion the poor man ought always to find a friend ; one who can sympathise with his sufferings, and treat him as the partaker of a common nature.

“The physician,” says Hufeland, “in the exercise of his art, must regard only man, and make no difference between rich and poor, high and low. He who suffers most, or is in the greatest danger, has a privilege over all others, whatever be their station or condition in society. I pity the physician who appreciates his patients according to rank or fortune ; he knows not the finest reward of a physician. What is a handful of gold compared with the tears of gratitude shed by the poor, who, unable to speak or to give, pour out a confession of eternal indebtedness.”

Many acts much applauded by society are less truly worthy of our admiration than the conduct of him who leaves his comfortable home, his cheerful family circle, perhaps his midnight couch, and seeks, it may be, through the winter's storm, the wretched cottage of some suffering fellow-creature, forgetting, the moment he sees his patient, all fatigue, all annoyance, in the earnest desire to preserve the life and health of one who perhaps will never be able to repay him even the slightest pittance. Therefore let no one who cannot sacrifice his own ease, and that often without a view to pecuniary reward, enter the medical profession.

The symbol of Tulpius was “a burning lamp which consumes itself in lighting others ;” and thus must it ever

be with the medical practitioner. He has consecrated himself to a profession of which self-indulgence forms no part; he must be ready at all times to spend his strength in the service of his fellow-creatures, irrespectively of station, or even of moral character.

Whilst we say this we would by no means justify the large demands sometimes made on the time and patience of a medical man by those who, whilst they have the power, are still backward to pay him at all, or to pay him in anything like the proportion which the case demands. Such persons ought to reflect, that if all were thus to act it would be impossible for him to maintain his position; and why should they expect to receive the benefit of a profession to whose support they are unwilling to contribute their just quota? Such conduct is also an injustice to those who are really destitute, since the medical man who is not adequately remunerated by his richer patients, is necessarily less able to give gratuitous assistance to the destitute. There is another unfair advantage sometimes taken of the practitioner, that of endeavouring in social conversation to get a professional opinion, as it were incidentally, and of course gratuitously. There is a ludicrous anecdote current of an eminent physician at Cambridge, who was asked to dinner by a fellow of King's, who had warily calculated the relative costs of the entertainment, and balanced them against a fee. After dinner he began to complain to his guest of various ailments, and concluded by saying, "Now, doctor, what would you advise me to take?" "Take, my dear fellow!" replied the physician, "why, take advice, to be sure, immediately."

Benevolence is sometimes made to bear the burden of these unfair demands. Well-intentioned and charitable persons will call on a medical man, requesting him to visit some poor patient; perhaps if he be connected with a public institution, to give advice, or make a visit out of the

prescribed hours, and never think of remunerating him, or appear sensible that they are asking any particular favour, or at all inconveniencing him by thus invading his hours of leisure. But such conduct should be avoided, as it is merely doing good at the expense of others.

To return to the subject of visits. "A visit," says Hufeland, "must be made with deliberation, a collected mind, and be of sufficient duration. The physician must not be present in body only, but in mind, and must direct his whole attention to his patient and study him. It is only such visits that will answer the purpose sought." Desultory conversation on general subjects is not usually desirable, especially at the commencement of the visit, unless, as in the case of some nervous and excitable persons, the practitioner finds it beneficial in composing the mind of the patient, and enabling him to take a juster estimate of the state of the pulse, &c. On these points, however, age, sex, and character will modify the practice of the judicious man. In some cases very nervous patients have a dread of the visit of the medical man, and the heart's action and nervous system are so much affected by his entrance, as to mask the character of the disease. A curious instance of this is recorded in the life of the great physiologist Haller, who several times was anxious to examine the phenomena of hiccup in his grandchildren, but such was the awe with which he had inspired them, that whenever they were brought into his presence the convulsive movement instantly ceased.

Whilst a cheerful encouraging manner is of great importance in a sick room, the sufferer often watching the very looks of his medical attendant, as if he could read there his fate; whilst everything morose and repellent should be sedulously avoided, there should be nothing like an approach to levity or unseasonable jocularity, and jocularity is generally unseasonable, and often highly

painful to the invalid. A light off-hand way of talking of the sufferings of others by no means tends to make them think lightly of them, however it may show that we have not much feeling about the matter. A becoming seriousness of deportment is much more soothing, as it gives hope that the medical man's mind is intent upon the case, and earnest in his efforts for relief. And, above all, there should be kindness and gentleness of manner; even where there is, as there often may be, some waywardness or unreasonableness about the patient—especially if a child—a harsh roughness only serves to irritate and excite contradiction, whilst it disgusts the relatives and friends.

A medical man may sometimes be placed in a difficult and delicate position, in cases where his patient may not have any very near connexions, and where it is apparent that there is a little backwardness in those about the invalid to incur the trouble and expense of carrying out his treatment. In such cases it is his office to act as the friend and guardian of the sick, and to use every means, by persuasion and remonstrance, to secure due attention to his prescriptions. He should endeavour, if possible, without betraying suspicion or encouraging querulousness, to get a true account of what passes in his absence.

As to the frequency of medical visits, they should not be made at such long intervals as to give the patient the feeling of being neglected. There is a great difference in the feelings of invalids in this respect. Some derive comfort from the frequency of a medical man's visits, whilst others feel alarmed if they are repeated often, and are apt thence to infer that he thinks very unfavorably of their case. When the late Dr. Abercrombie commenced practice in Edinburgh, his visits were so much more frequent than those of the other medical men as to excite attention, and it was thought that much of his success was owing to

this cause. On the other hand, many patients look with a degree of jealousy on visits which they think unnecessarily repeated. After all, the medical man is the best judge of the necessity of his visits, and of the urgency and danger of the patient's case. Of course delicacy should be exercised where the patient's circumstances are narrow, lest a feeling of anxiety should be created as to the expense incurred. In such cases the feeling and benevolent practitioner is called upon to exercise a degree of self-sacrifice, and to make now and then an extra visit as if incidentally, and for his own satisfaction.

There is another point to which we wish to refer whilst on the subject of visits, and that is, medical visits on the Sunday. There is a great difficulty in drawing a line of demarcation as to when they ought and when they ought not to be paid. For our own part, we consider that when they can be dispensed with without injury to the patient they ought to be, both for the sake of securing to the medical man as much as possible of that sacred rest which he as well as other men needs, and for the sake of the family of the patient, who being on that day probably assembled together, feel the visit of the medical attendant, if not really called for by the urgency of the case, an unseasonable and unwelcome intrusion. Where active disease is going on of course this does not apply; but wherever, by proper management on the Saturday, the Sunday visit can be avoided it ought to be done. Percival says on this subject, "The observance of the Sabbath is a duty to which medical men are bound, so far as is compatible with the urgency of the cases under their charge. Visits may often be made with sufficient convenience and benefit, either before the hours of going to church, or during the intervals of public worship. And in many chronic ailments, the sick, together with their attendants, are qualified to participate in the social offices of religion,

and should not be induced to forego this important privilege by the expectation of a call from their physician or surgeon."

We may add, that if the medical man be one who has a due sense of the highest interests of mankind, he may, without at all going out of his appropriate sphere, take occasion by a few natural remarks, the recommendation of a book, &c., contrive to make his Sunday visit a moral benefit to his patient.

The last point which requires notice is how far it is right for the physician to continue his visits when the disease is incurable. "Sir William Temple has asserted, that an honest physician is excused for leaving a patient when he finds the disease growing desperate, and can, by his attendance, expect only to receive his fees, without any hopes or appearance of deserving them. But this allegation is not well founded, for the offices of a physician may continue to be highly useful to the patient, and comforting to the relatives around him, even in the last period of a fatal malady, by obviating despair, by alleviating pain, and by soothing mental anguish. To decline attendance under such circumstances would be sacrificing to fanciful delicacy and mistaken liberality that moral duty which is independent of, and far superior to, all pecuniary appreciation."*

Simon says on this point—"The duties of a medical man with regard to maladies of this kind, vary according to circumstances, of which we shall here point out the principal. Amongst really incurable diseases there are a certain number in which a wise and judicious treatment, a hygiene, which embraces at once the physical and moral regimen of the invalid, may indefinitely retard the fatal termination. There are others which call more specially

* Percival.

for the employment of palliatives, and in which we are permitted to deprive suffering of part of its bitterness, and to render the endurance of existence less painful. In the few remaining maladies which do not admit even of palliation, and where art finds itself completely disarmed, the office of the physician is changed, but by no means at an end. His very presence is a comfort and encouragement, and if he possesses those qualities of the mind and heart which Lancisi, Baglivi, Antoine Petit, Cabanis, J. Frank, Hufeland, and many others, have shown to exercise so powerful a control over the moral, and consequently over the physical nature of suffering man, he may be eminently useful in employing, for the benefit of the invalid, that ascendancy which those precious qualities secure to him."

One other remark in the Letter to Tulpius we must not pass unnoticed. It is what is said of his respect for the powers of Nature. This is a point in medical practice which should never be lost of. "Inest enim corpori vis prorsus mirabilis, qua contra morbos se tueatur multos arceat, multos jam inchoatos quam optime et citissime solvat, aliosque suo modo, ad felicem exitum lentius perducatur." One of Marx's Aphorisms beautifully expresses the regard which a medical man should have for the *Vis Naturæ Medicatrix*. "The wise physician treats the healing power of Nature as the sunflower the sun; he follows it until it becomes invisible." All medical practice is founded upon the principle of restoring the deranged functions of the body to their normal state, and he will best succeed in the practice of his profession, who most closely watches the performance of these functions, both in health and disease, and the efforts made by Nature to restore them when deranged, adapting his treatment in such manner as to produce the same effect.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF PHILIP PINEL.

Philip Pinel was born on the 11th of April, 1745, at St. Paul, a village near the town of Castres, which is now included in the département du Tarn. His father practised medicine and surgery; his mother was a model of piety; but his parents had a numerous family and a very moderate fortune. They sent their son Philip first to the college of Lavaur, where he received the first principles of education; but as he was destined for the church, he was removed to the school of Toulouse, where he followed a course of philosophy under a professor who assisted him in becoming an excellent mathematician. He now desired to commence the study of theology, but circumstances altered his intentions. With the consent of his father he quitted the university, and having freed himself from all dependence on his friends, he commenced giving lessons in mathematics and philosophy. He tried for, and obtained, the floral wreath for his proficiency, and by his own exertions earned sufficient to follow his medical studies. He was for some years chosen by one of the professors as his assistant, and ultimately, on the 22d of December, 1773, after having undergone his examination with great honour to himself, he received the title of Doctor. Pinel was then in his 29th year, and his prospects were not the most brilliant. He had lost his father, and could not expect

anything from his family, while the small profits of his teachings were scarcely sufficient for his present necessities, and he looked at the future with anxiety. The hope of bettering his circumstances, and, above all, of increasing his knowledge, induced him to go to Montpellier, where he arrived in 1775. The school of this celebrated town was then in all its glory, for although it no longer had either Fizes or Sauvages, yet the wisdom of Barthez, the knowledge and eloquence of Zamure, Leroi, Venel, and Gouan, as professors, and the talents of Vigaroux, Chaptal, and Fouquet, as practitioners, gave to Montpellier a glory which was not equalled by any other medical school in Europe. Pinel had hardly arrived at this modern Cos when he found both an asylum and support in the family of M. Benezech, where he was received as tutor to his son, a youth who afterwards became truly a man of genius. While devoting himself in this manner to the education of his pupil, he employed his leisure hours in increasing his medical knowledge, in attending some courses of chemistry and natural history, and in perfecting himself in the Greek and English languages. He also composed theses for young students. These theses, written correctly and with elegance, were looked upon as fine examples of Latinity. Much was in this way required of him, and what especially proves the wisdom and moderation of his mind, he almost invariably took for his subject some question of hygiene; for if there is in medicine anything of certainty or probability, it is assuredly in questions of this nature. With regard to those high questions of medical philosophy which at a future day he was to treat with so much vigour and clearness, and which have usually such an attraction to the inexperienced and imaginative, Pinel never touched on these at this time. Perhaps, with the eye of a master, he perceived that his mind had not then attained its necessary maturity, or he thought that the spirit of sys-

tematizing which he possessed was mere hypothesis, and that in the most methodical arrangements he perceived there was something arbitrary, which balanced their utility. This reserve was so much more worthy of praise, as in the same place, and at a less advanced age than Pinel, and it might also be said with about the same amount of study, Sauvages had given a great example of this happy boldness in speculation. And if it was lawful for any man to imitate and emulate his example, it surely was in him who was at a future day to reform the finest work of that author.

In order the better to understand the turn which his character and ideas had at this time taken, I will relate the following fact. A young man was then at Montpellier, passionately fond of study, and, full of ardour and fancy, he was impatient to become an author, and tried almost every kind of writing,—composed verses, comedies, tragedies, some tracts on philosophy and medicine,—above all, charmed with the beautiful, and seeking the relations of order and symmetry between his own ideas, and sometimes substituting for real relations imaginary or hypothetical ones,—in a word, smitten with that which is called system, he adopted nothing which was not in strict accordance with it. Pinel was struck with the brilliancy of his talents, and grieved to see so many natural gifts consumed on chimerical conceptions, and he undertook to turn his young friend from this mental intoxication and enchantment. “You are ill,” said Pinel to him, “and in order to cure you I propose but a trifling compliance on your part, i. e. to read with me some pages each day of Hippocrates, of Montaigne, and of Plutarch.” The proposition was accepted: in the morning the two friends read Hippocrates, and the evening was reserved for Montaigne and Plutarch; and these readings, continued without intermission, without constraint, suspended now and then by a

little rest, intermingled with digressions, remarks, and commentaries,—these readings, thus varied, produced by their very variety a charm which rendered them much more solid and efficacious. However diversified may be the pictures, those great painters of human nature have a common character which distinguish them from other writers. Whenever you commune with them, you feel that their reason takes your own mind captive, they elevate and enlighten it. Very often a single point, in their hands, expands itself into an immense horizon,—there they wander, as it were, in that infinite variety of ideas, of sentiments, of passions, and of infirmities, which form the frail tissue of our existence,—they familiarise you with that prodigious interlacement of combinations and relations which bind together so many different conditions, and agree so little with systematic arrangements. With these manly spirits the young friend and pupil of Pinel became imbued; he learnt to represent to himself things under their true form, and in their true situation in relation to other things. His enthusiasm, thus shook, changed its object; he detached himself from vain systems, in order to concentrate his mind on individual facts, for individual facts are the only realities of this world, and these realities are the only foundations of our reason. Principles are nothing in themselves, but the things which authorise principles,—without the facts, the principles are but words without substance. How excellent was the fruit drawn from such great masters by this young friend of Pinel's! France has since witnessed him shining by his knowledge and ability in the schools, in the universities, in the most elevated situations of the administration, at the head of a powerful ministry. His writings, his services, have merited for him the most glorious of recompenses, for he was the august framer of the Charter; this has elevated him to the rank of the noble guardians of our liberties, and the Count

Chaptal has now a seat in the Chamber of Peers of France.

The same country which in the course of a century had produced Machiavelli and Guicciardini, Michael Angelo and Raphael, Ariosto and Tasso, had also given to the world Galileo, and from his school arose a generation of geometricians, who, after having carried the system of accurate calculation into physical science, thus following the example of Descartes, now attempted to apply it to medicine. The most happy and the most celebrated of these, was Alphonso Borelli, whose posthumous work upon the Movements of Animals had been composed for Christina, queen of Sweden. This work was full of discoveries and original views. In explaining the action of that double arrangement of cords and levers by which the movements of animals are produced, Borelli was the first to show, contrary to the opinion of the ancients, that to put in play these organs, and to overcome light obstacles, man was obliged to expend an excessive and disproportionate force; but he also showed, that by the particular arrangement, the animal occupied less space, had more elegant proportions, more lightness of form, more firmness in its articulations, more agility in its movements, and, by this marvellous compensation, it had a firmer hold on external bodies, whilst they had but the least possible hold on it. Admirable truths! which became to all lessons, of theology, and which the critics, however they may commend the labours of Parent, of Varignon, of Hamberger, or the work of Perrault upon Animal Mechanics, or the observations of Vicq-d'Azyr, or the treatise of Barthez upon the same subject, will never despoil Borelli of his glory. Pinel, with Chirac and many others, was enchanted with this beautiful work; he studied it deeply, in order to apply more directly the principles to the movements of the human body. This important labour comprehended two

parts. The one relative to the partial movements of the extremities, the other the whole movements of the body taken collectively. The first of his labours he finished in 1777, and it was communicated by the author to the Société Royale of Montpellier. The second was not finished until after some years, and this was reserved for the Academy of Sciences; neither have been published. It is however supposed, that the articles on Zoology, Comparative Anatomy, and even of Surgery, which Pinel published at a later period, in certain periodicals, were fragments of them, and these, unfortunately, are the only parts of his labours upon the treatise of Borelli which remain to us.

Whether it was Pinel's modesty, or the natural timidity of his character, or whatever was the reason which induced him to remain at Montpellier is unknown. At length, however, he began to feel a secret conviction of his own powers, and to believe that he was worthy of a larger field for the display of his talents. He turned his eyes towards the capital, and in the year 1798 he arrived in Paris, accompanied by an Englishman, whose great talents have also raised his name high in medicine. As the two friends travelled without passports, they excited suspicion, and were detained for some time in a small village, an incident which proves the mean appearance of their equipage. Having arrived in Paris, Pinel's first thoughts were how to live. He had, happily for him, the same resource which Boerhaave had,—a knowledge of geometry. He had been recommended to a celebrated geometrician in the capital, M. Cousin, who, struck with his display of genius for mathematics, recommended some pupils of the artillery to him. Pinel only accepted two, and the sums which he received for teaching these were sufficient to support him, and to leave time to devote to labour of a different kind. By accident his lodging was directly opposite to that which

a young man occupied, who, like himself, cultivated science with indefatigable ardour. This was M. Desfontaines, whose travels, writings, and lessons, full of candour, united with an amiable gentleness and simplicity, have conciliated universal respect. M. Desfontaines and M. Pinel were not acquainted, but seeing each other every day and every hour hard at study, it created a mutual desire in both to become intimate, and the result was that one of those rare friendships was formed which makes a future existence necessary to continue it. This friendship produced others. Pinel made acquaintance with Roussel and Cabanis,—Roussel, whose beautiful and delicately-pencilled sketches excited universal admiration,—Cabanis, who, approaching the phenomena of our internal and external sensibilities, and following them in the effects of their mutual influence, laid the true foundations of human philosophy. As Pinel's connexions extended, he saw the occasions multiply in which his intellectual riches could be put to profit,—he wrote, in the '*Journal de Paris*,' various articles on medicine, on physics, on moral philosophy and economy. The '*Gazette de Santé*' was confided to him, and, during many years, this periodical prospered in his hands. There were in it, from time to time, some excellent pieces on hygiene which he contributed, for hygiene was always his favorite study. In his critical remarks he occasionally showed a little severity, which proved that he could have wielded satire with powerful effect, had he not been restrained by his judgment and kindness of heart. From 1754 to 1779 there had been published, in thirteen volumes, quarto, extracts from all the Transactions published by the learned bodies of Europe, since the commencement of their existence. This general extract had not been continued, although it well merited it; and that of the Philosophical Transactions stopped at the year 1694. This was a gap which it was important to fill up; an abridgment of the

Transactions had been published in England, and a translation of them into French was undertaken; this was published between the years 1789 and 1791. Of the four volumes, of which the translation was composed, the industrious Pinel translated three: the first upon chemistry, the second upon anatomy and animal physics, and the third upon medicine and surgery.

That caution which is often the result of boldness of thought and of truth, Pinel carried into his examination of a very singular fact, that of the ossification of the brain in oxen. It is very surprising that some of the animals, in which this change was found, had retained all their vigour. The first example of this kind was given by Bartholinus, who wrote upon the faith of another person, hardly believing in the fact himself. The second instance had been given in 1703 by Duverney, who retained the altered portion in his possession; Valisneri, however, accused him of credulity, although a similar fact had been verified, in 1670, at Padua, by Malpighi; but such is the fate of every isolated fact,—it is treated at first as an adventure, and does not obtain belief but by being repeated, as if that which we call reason was, at the bottom, but habit. However, other brains have been found ossified even to the hardness of marble, and have been seen, both in Saxony and Scotland, by Pitchell and Simpson. The last which was seen was exhibited at Paris, by H.^d Baron, at the Académie des Sciences, in 1753. It was this brain, preserved by M. Deyeux, that Pinel examined, and upon which, in 1793, he wrote a memoir, terminated by this dilemma, full of meaning: “Either these stony masses are brains transformed, as may be proved by the vascular network, the ramifications of which they preserve, or they are tumours, which growing slowly till having filled the cerebral cavity, they have compressed without measure the brain. In either case it is incom-

prehensible that life and, still more, health can be maintained in these animals. In what state then must the origin of the nerves be in them? this is what I have not studied."

Whilst thus dividing his time amongst various occupations (for he was writing for the '*Encyclopédie Méthodique*;' he had published a translation of Cullen, and an edition of Baglivi; he was pursuing the study of botany with his friend Desfontaines, and that of chemistry under D'Arcet and Fourcroy), Pinel, satisfied with the present, and secure, or perhaps careless, about the future, took no pains to form a connexion; and, though he followed hospital practice, he declined opportunities of seeing and treating the sick. But, in 1785, he had the misfortune to lose a young man to whom he was much attached, and whose reason became affected through excessive study and abstinence. This unfortunate person, after his return to his family, became maniacal, one evening he escaped from his father's house into the neighbouring forest, and was devoured by wolves; a few torn rags were found the following day, and near them a copy of the *Phædra* covered with blood. Pinel was remarkably struck with this dreadful catastrophe; it is probable that it was this event which first turned his mind towards the study of a species of malady so capricious, so frightful, and, till then, so little understood. About this time, indeed, an establishment for the treatment of the insane had been formed; the first patient which it received was placed there by Pinel; and here, according to appearance, he first tried those innovations which will for ever endear his name to posterity. For the restraint and the punishments employed almost everywhere else, in those paroxysms which characterise extreme madness, Pinel substituted measures in which justice was moderated by kindness. He left to the harmless patients the enjoyment of their natural liberty;

he only employed restraint against dangerous violence, but he employed it in such moderation that the equity of the patient, far from being wounded, yielded to it; for it is worthy of admiration that, in the greatest disorders of the mind, the sense of equity is never extinct. It is a sense which the physician ought always to respect in the mind of the patient, and which, sooner or later, will open an opportunity of benefiting him.

Six years of success had stamped their approbation on this method, which is even more accordant with medical science than it is with humanity, when, in 1792, the Société Royale de Médecine proposed a prize for the resolution of this question: "What are the most efficacious methods of treating patients whose minds become alienated before old age." Pinel became a competitor; his work, mentioned in the *séance publique*, held the 28th of August, 1792, exhibited this motto borrowed from Celsus, — "*Gerere se pro cujusque natura necessarium*," a profound maxim applicable to all diseases, but especially to alienation of mind. We do not find, from this incomplete and imperfect manuscript, whether Pinel received this prize, but at any rate he received one still more worthy of him. Thouret was a member of the Société Royale; he made one of a commission which had examined the Memoir of Pinel, and he conceived a great esteem for the talents and character of the author. The changes of affairs placed Thouret, Cousin, and Cabanis at the head of the hospitals. Notwithstanding the reforms attempted by the most humane of kings, the asylums of the capital were in the most deplorable state of barbarity. That which presented the most revolting spectacle was the Bicêtre: vice, crime, misfortune, infirmity, diseases the most disgusting and the most dissimilar, were all confounded together, as were also the offices of attendants. The buildings were unfit for habitation. In them were congregated men crouching

together in the mud, in stone cells, narrow, cold, damp, destitute of air and light, and merely furnished with a straw bed, seldom renewed, and soon becoming foul and offensive; wretched dens, in which one would hesitate to place the meanest animal. The insane, who were immured in these filthy holes, were at the mercy of their attendants, and these persons were malefactors released from prison. The wretched patients were loaded with chains and manacled like convicts. Thus given up defenceless to the wickedness of their guardians, they were the sports of an insulting mockery, or of a brutality all the more blind that it was gratuitous. This unjust and cruel treatment transported them with indignation, despair, and rage, putting the finishing stroke to the derangement of their reason, and forced from them night and day shrieks and howlings, which rendered yet more hideous the clank of their irons. Some, more patient, or more dissembling than others, appeared insensible to these outrages; but they only concealed their resentment the better to satisfy it. They watched the movements of their executioners, and, surprising them in an inconvenient attitude, they would strike them with their fetters on the head or on the chest, and lay them expiring at their feet. Thus, on the one side there was ferocity, and on the other murder. Once in this criminal path, it was difficult to stop; and in this abominable system of retaliation what amelioration of mental malady could be looked for?

The three administrators groaned over this mixture of crime and misfortune. All three were the friends of Pinel, and all three judged that Pinel was the only man in France who was capable of remedying these evils. They appointed him physician of the Hospital of Bicêtre. He entered on his functions towards the close of the year 1792, and with him entered pity, respect, consideration, goodness, and justice; methods, or rather virtues, whose

beneficent influence he had already tried over the most furious patients. The face of things was entirely but gradually changed. There was a man at Bicêtre whom instinct had made, in some respects, the precursor of Pinel ; a man of no great cultivation, but of good sense, fine tact, and of a tender and compassionate heart, notwithstanding his natural roughness. Pussin, for that was his name, braving apprehensions and clamours, had ventured to take off the irons of some of the patients. This first attempt had been successful, the rest was completed under the enlightened management of Pinel, and the patients, having their countenances no longer distorted with exasperation, fury, and terror, resumed their natural physiognomy, and gave opportunity to the wise physician to observe them more carefully, and to delineate truthful pictures of them.

[Towards the end of 1792 Pinel, after having many times urged the government to allow him to unchain the maniacs of the Bicêtre, but in vain, went himself to the authorities, and with much earnestness and warmth advocated the removal of this monstrous abuse. Couthon, a member of the commune, gave way to M. Pinel's arguments, and agreed to meet him at the Bicêtre. Couthon then interrogated those who were chained, but the abuse he received, and the confused sound of cries, vociferations, and clanking of chains, in the filthy and damp cells, made him recoil from Pinel's proposition. "You may do what you will with them," said he, "but I fear you will become their victim." Pinel instantly commenced his undertaking. There were about fifty whom he considered might, without danger to the others, be unchained, and he began by releasing twelve, with the sole precaution of having previously prepared the same number of strong waistcoats with long sleeves, which could be tied behind the back if necessary. The first man on whom the

experiment was to be tried was an English captain, whose history no one knew, as he had been in chains forty years. He was thought to be the most furious among them; his keepers approached him with caution, as he had, in a fit of fury, killed one of them on the spot with a blow from his manacles. He was chained more rigorously than any of the others. Pinel entered his cell unattended, and calmly said to him, "Captain, I will order your chains to be taken off, and give you liberty to walk in the court, if you will promise me to behave well and injure no one." "Yes, I promise you," said the maniac, "but you are laughing at me; you are all too much afraid of me." "I have six men," answered Pinel, "ready to enforce my commands if necessary. Believe me then, on my word, I will give you your liberty if you will put on this waistcoat." He submitted to this willingly, without a word; his chains were removed, and the keepers retired, leaving the door of his cell open. He raised himself many times from his seat, but fell again on it, for he had been in a sitting posture so long that he had lost the use of his legs. In a quarter of an hour he succeeded in maintaining his balance, and with tottering steps came to the door of his dark cell. His first look was at the sky, and he cried out enthusiastically, "How beautiful!" During the rest of the day he was constantly in motion, walking up and down the staircases, and uttering short exclamations of delight. In the evening he returned, of his own accord, into his cell, where a better bed than he had been accustomed to had been prepared for him, and he slept tranquilly. During the two succeeding years which he spent at the Bicêtre he had no return of his previous paroxysms, but even rendered himself useful, by exercising a kind of authority over the insane patients, whom he ruled in his own fashion.

The next unfortunate being whom Pinel visited was a

soldier of the French Guards, whose only fault was drunkenness. When once he lost all self-command by drink he became quarrelsome and violent, and the more dangerous from his great bodily strength. From his frequent excesses he had been discharged from his corps, and he had speedily dissipated his scanty means. Disgrace and misery so distressed him, that he became insane. In his paroxysms he believed himself a general, and fought those who would not acknowledge his rank. After a furious struggle of this sort, he was brought to the Bicêtre in a state of the greatest excitement. He had now been chained for ten years, and with greater care than the others, from his having frequently broken his fetters with his hands. Once when he broke loose, he defied all his keepers to enter his cell until they had each passed under his legs, and he compelled eight men to obey this strange command. Pinel, in his previous visits to him, regarded him as a man of original good nature, but under excitement, incessantly kept up by cruel treatment, and he had promised speedily to ameliorate his condition, which promise alone had made him more calm. Now he announced to him that he should be chained no longer, and to prove that he had confidence in him, and believed him to be capable of better things, he called upon him to assist in releasing those others who had not reason like himself, and promised, if he conducted himself well, to take him into his own service. The change was sudden and complete. No sooner was he liberated than he became obliging and attentive, following with his eye every motion of Pinel, and executing his orders with as much address as promptitude. He spoke kindly and reasonably to the other patients, and during the rest of his life was entirely devoted to his deliverer. "And I can never hear, without emotion," says Pinel's son, "the name of this man, who some years after this occurrence shared with me the games

of my childhood, and to whom I shall always feel attached.” In the course of a few days Pinel released fifty-three maniacs from their chains : among them were men of all conditions and countries. The result was beyond his hopes. Tranquillity and harmony succeeded to tumult and disorder, and the whole discipline was marked with a regularity and kindness which had the most favorable effect on the insane themselves.*]

After two years' residence at the Bicêtre, Pinel was summoned to carry into another asylum the happy change which he had effected in the former. This was the Salpêtrière, where similar abuses reigned. This asylum contained only those female insane patients who had already been subjected to the treatment of the Hôtel Dieu, an indiscriminating and imperfect treatment which aggravated the condition of the sufferers. To restrain their impetuosity they were overwhelmed with the same severities, or rather irritated by the same violence. Chained down sometimes quite naked in their cells, almost subterraneous, and worse than dungeons, they often had their feet gnawed by rats, or frozen with cold. Thus, wounded on every side, their lacerated hearts breathed nothing but vengeance, and in the intoxication of hatred which possessed them, they only sought, like so many bacchantes, to tear their waiting-women or each other. Surprising as it may seem, numerous obstacles opposed themselves to the system of Pinel, although experience had declared for it. The system itself which he sought to destroy produced such effects as appeared to authorise its continuance. “Thus reasons cruelty,” says Montesquieu. But the administration comprehended at last that the treatment of insanity required, more than anything else, uniformity in views, although it admits of a great variety in measures.

* From a paper read at the Académie des Sciences by the son of Pinel. See British and Foreign Medical Review, No. I, p. 286.

They took the management from the Hôtel Dieu, and placed it entirely in the hands of Pinel; and henceforth, seconded by the assistant of his choice, the faithful Pussin, Pinel, throwing from him, like vain shadows, the resistance of custom and the ties of interest, succeeded in substituting order for confusion, rules for caprice, and the sacred duties of humanity for the shameful excesses of barbarity. The reforms in this institution have since been perfected by Esquirol, and the Salpêtrière has taken an eminent rank amongst the asylums consecrated to misfortune.

Science reaped from these experiments an abundant profit. Diseases better classed, were, as at the Bicêtre, better observed, better known, and better described. After many sketches, communicated to the *sociétés savantes* and collected in the 'Mémoires de la Société Médicale d'Emulation,' Pinel published, in 1801, the results of his laborious studies; and this first work, recast and retouched by the author, was republished, in 1809, under the title of 'Traité Medico-Philosophique sur l'Aliénation mentale.' This work following another work of a more elevated order, of which we shall speak presently, put in some manner the seal on Pinel's fame. The work on insanity is more decidedly stamped with originality than any other. Pinel penetrated, more deeply than his predecessors into the intimate nature of acute mania; he considered it as the act of the living principle, which can change its organization; an act which art may retard, disturb, or pervert by rash treatment, but which we ought only to seek to moderate in its energy, so that the mania may develop itself naturally, and progress freely towards its termination. The interference of remedies or spontaneous obstacles often precipitate it towards those unhappy results which, disconcerting the primitive plan, sometimes allow it to reappear under the same form; at other times alter its nature, and reproduce it under a new appearance, and one henceforth incurable. With re-

gard to the various forms which insanity assumes, Pinel classes them under four different heads, mania, melancholy, dementia, and idiocy. This division comprehends, without contradiction, the principal masses, but it is not sufficiently definite; and whatever light it throws on the study of a disease so varied, it is now acknowledged that such an outline cannot embrace all its forms.

Pinel's book will always be of infinite value on account of its facts, of the methods and views which he suggests, the moral lessons which parents and those entrusted with the education of youth may derive from it; for reason is itself one source of elevated and social sentiments, regular and moderate habits, and the soul has no surer guarantee against its aberrations. Add to this, this experimental truth which Pinel has firmly established, namely, that with the insane, kindness is the most influential remedy, and justice the most imposing authority. And these two virtues Pinel would not confine to the daily and direct intercourse with the patients; he would have their presence manifested, their language heard in all that surrounds, affects, and interests them; so that there is nothing which can enter into an establishment formed for them which the attentive humanity of Pinel has not pointed out in his work; nothing which he does not teach to foresee, and to regulate in advance. This book is calculated to be the manual at once of physicians and governors. May his affecting solicitude survive him,* and the benefit of which he gave the example be extended and perpetuated by his counsels.

It is time to turn our attention to the most important

* This aspiration has been fully realised in the efforts of our own Conolly. "HIER," says Professor Marx, in recording his visit to Hanwell; "HIER WIRD DURCH DIE THAT BEWIESEN, WAS DER MENSCH UBER DEN MENSCHEN DURCH DAS MENSCHLICHE VERMAG."

epoch in the life of Pinel. Medical instruction had, like every other, been neglected in the troubles of the times ; and yet the calamities of war rendered medical knowledge more than ever necessary. In the midst of the conflagration into which France and Europe, in arms, had precipitated themselves, three schools were formed (amongst the French), on the most extensive plan which has ever been carried out in any age ; if it be not, perhaps, under the Lagides for the Institute of Alexandria. The most enlightened men were chosen to form the school of Paris. Never had a school united a greater amount of talent. Pinel was associated with his friends Thouret and Cabanis in this group of eminent men ; he was first attached to the chair of hygiene and medical physique. He had shortly after the chair of pathology, and this latter appointment was to him a double cause of anxiety. It was no new thing for him to teach ; but it is one thing to give instruction privately and familiarly on geometrical propositions, so closely connected that they are as if identical with each other, and demonstrated more by diagrams than words ; it is another thing to treat, before a large assembly, a complex subject, whose development needs not merely a plan, a regular and clear arrangement of ideas, but also a series and a tissue of expressions at once simple, elevated, and perspicuous, always easy, and always varied so as to stimulate the attention, and keep the subject incessantly within the reach of the mind. Pinel did not possess this happy gift of eloquence, at least not in a public audience, whose very presence intimidated him. In the second place perhaps he had never contemplated in all its extent the subject which he had to develop to his pupils. What an inexhaustible subject ! and, even in the domain of internal maladies, what a multitude and variety of objects, or rather what a mixture and confusion ! To engage in this labyrinth with his auditors, before he had reconnoitred

its paths, was too repugnant to the nature of his mind; and he, at last, came to the conclusion that he had no resource in these difficulties but himself, and that he must create a system and arrangement of his own. Such was the origin of the work which spread widely the fame of Pinel, and which, in 1798, appeared in two volumes, under the title of ‘*Nosographie Philosophique, ou la Méthode de l’Analyse appliquée à la Médecine.*’

The Nosography did not attain, at its first publication, that perfection of plan, details, or even of nomenclature, which it afterwards exhibited. The editions succeeded each other rapidly, but in their intervals Pinel made use of such judicious remarks and criticisms as were communicated to him. In proportion as it received these improving touches, the work circulated more and more extensively throughout Europe; whilst in France, and especially in the *Ecole de Paris*, the impression which it produced on its first appearance became deeper and deeper. At the solicitation of many distinguished pupils, who, full of admiration for the book and veneration for its author, came to seek his instructions at the bedside of the sick, Pinel established a *clinique*. Every disease was studied before the eyes of the pupils, analysed and characterised by the master. The remarks were preserved, and, after some years, these labours gave rise to another work, which appeared in 1802 under the title of ‘*Médecine Clinique*,’ a work in which the maladies are classed according to the order prescribed in the Nosography; this ‘*Clinique*’ was literally the Nosography in action. He who glances at the articles on treatment in the Nosography, and the brief remarks in his ‘*Clinique*,’ will have no doubts concerning the wisdom of Pinel or his practice; but will render ample homage to his profound and straightforward good sense, and to the independence and firmness of his

mind. It is a remarkable fact that Pinel, when suddenly placed at the Bicêtre, in 1792, amidst a multitude of patients, hesitated, felt his way, and did not know where to begin; yet in 1800 he had become a master, and a great master. It was that his mind possessed that instrument *par excellence*, the faculty of analysis, which separates things to unite them by their relations. This faculty of analysis was exercised by Pinel on a description of labour previously unknown to him. He visited a wash-house at Sèvres, examined this branch of industry, and suggested improvements. Superior in little things, this faculty is not less so in great ones, and it was through it that Pinel obtained the singular honour of reforming the practice of his contemporaries; he learned to see, to study, to separate phenomena, to bring them together, to compare them, to measure them in some sort, and, finally, to form his conclusions; but to form these conclusions by cautious inductions, and thereon to regulate the choice and application of medicaments—medicaments which he always preferred should be simple, few, and of well-known effect. In short, by his lessons and his example, he did what Cabanis wished to do—he restored the *medicine of observation*, the only one which Hippocrates, in his divine works, has bequeathed to posterity. The multitude and solidity of his writings,—the number and talents of his pupils,—the feelings which attached them to his person and his doctrine,—all concurred to form, in the midst even of the Ecole de Paris, what was for a time called the school of Pinel, as opposed to the Ecole de Charité, whose head, or rather master, was Corvisart. Neither Corvisart nor Pinel thought of this rivalry, unworthy of their noble characters. Pinel never suffered a word against Corvisart to be uttered in his presence. Corvisart repressed, with the utmost severity, the shadow of an insinuation against Pinel. But both

were the idols of their pupils ; both were equal perhaps in genius ; with this difference that, in Corvisart, the intuitive faculty supplied the place of study ; in Pinel, study took the place of intuition. In one might be seen what Nature could do, in the other, what art could do ; with sagacity perhaps equal on both sides. At the sight of a corpse Corvisart would exclaim, that the subject died of indigestion. At the aspect of a supposed phthisical patient, Pinel would decide that the disease was in the abdomen ; both would be right, but Corvisart guessed, Pinel concluded ; one was led by his senses, the other by his inductions ; each reached his end with the same certainty, and perhaps the same promptitude. Between the merits of the two the public was undecided ; whilst Pinel took a pleasure, when opportunity served, of giving way to the ascendancy of Corvisart. When the question of the decennial prizes was pending, the same motives introduced similar rivalry. The '*Anatomie Médicale*' of the venerable A. Portal, so much esteemed by judges, and so rich in observations and pathological facts, was forgotten, and the competition was solely between the '*Traité des Maladies du Cœur*' and the '*Nosographie Philosophique*.' Hallé was the arbiter, but declined to decide between them.

Pinel is charged with having, in his writings, affected a brief, unconnected, sententious style, destitute of grace and flexibility. He desired that, as in botany and natural history, medicine should construct a language all of nouns, without verbs or conjunctions. He hoped thus to attain the energetic brevity of aphorisms ; but this brevity does not exclude the common links of speech, and for want of these necessary links, the diction of Pinel has a sort of broken movement which is fatiguing. I have already said that, in lecturing, Pinel had a difficulty in arranging his ideas ; to express himself with fluency

on any subject it was needful that it should interest his heart. Those who consulted him on their own sufferings, or on those of a parent, a child, or a friend, left his presence touched with the gentleness, the abundance, the variety, and the harmony of his words : goodness rendered him eloquent. Everywhere else habit or timidity embarrassed him, and rendered him unworthy of himself. One day M. Desfontaines, the pupil and *protégé* of M. Lemonnier, first royal physician, introduced Pinel to him, in the hope of attracting to his friend, then poor and unappreciated, a measure of that interest which he enjoyed himself. The interview was long ; Pinel did not utter a word. Repulsed by such sterility, M. Lemonnier only pitied M. Desfontaines for the illusion under which he laboured as to merit so reserved.

There were in the old *Faculté* chairs of *Docteur-régent*, which were obtained by concourse. After having failed three times, Pinel made another effort in 1784, and this time with a great prospect of success. His antagonist was a young doctor, who had been a *gendarme*, had quitted his profession in disgust, and who, at the time that Pinel was still at Montpellier, had taken it into his head to enter the medical profession. When the time came for him to defend his thesis, he had recourse to Pinel, who, judging that he would speak most fluently on a subject in which he had had experience, composed for him a Latin dissertation on Equitation. The young man was received with applause. Accident brought him to Paris in 1784, and some evil genius adverse to Pinel inspired him with the desire to offer himself as a candidate for the above-mentioned chair. What a contrast ! On the one side there was an imposing stature, a powerful voice, assurance, torrents of words, ideas, but few to the point ; on the other, a little figure, a slender voice, embarrassment, constraint, many ideas and

few words. Could victory hesitate? The cavalier triumphed, and Pinel withdrew into his obscurity.*

Yet from this rigidity of mind there sometimes issued, like flashes of lightning, repartees full of wit and vivacity. A man who had some just fame, but whom the thirst of applause rendered absurd, met Pinel, and said to him, "I am preparing a new edition of my '*Dictionnaire des Athées*;' this time I shall reserve for you an article with which you will be satisfied." "And I," replied Pinel, "am about to publish a new edition of my '*Traité sur la Folie*;' you may be assured that you will be in your place, in an article which I am composing expressly for you, and which will do you great credit." The author of the dictionary dropped all thoughts of gratifying Pinel with his brevet of atheist.

Pinel has been misjudged by his silence and the severity of his style. He had a heart open to tender impressions, and he loved poetry. The fire of his imagination was warmed by friendship, and occasionally betrayed him into excesses of emotion, as when taking a slight repast with the traveller Savary, with whom he had been intimate when young, and conversing on the genius of the Greeks, the two friends broke out into sobs at the fate of Sappho.

The mild and peaceful virtues of Pinel, and his consideration for the rights of others, were by no means incompatible with courage. This courage he exhibited at Paris at the Bicêtre, where he gave a retreat to Condorcet from the sword of the murderer, and concealed amongst the patients some unhappy victims whose opinions, or whose virtues, were hurrying them to the scaffold.

Pinel was a member of the Legion of Honour, a member

* A striking proof of the insufficiency of this mode of election, so much advocated by some, in which eminent merit, if unaccompanied by the power of ready and fluent expression, may so easily be misjudged and thrown into the shade.

of the Institute, physician in chief to the Asylum of the Salpêtrière, professor of the first school, and afterwards of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris. When this Faculty was reformed in 1822, Pinel only retained the title of honorary professor. This exclusion involved no disgrace, and he did not murmur at it, he only inquired if the good of medicine was secured. The august founder of the Académie de Médecine named him as one of its honorary members. On the visit of the Dauphin to the Salpêtrière, in 1818, Pinel received the order of Saint Michael.

M. Pinel was of short stature, of a lively countenance, an impatient temper, and a remarkably vigorous constitution. In 1823 he had a first attack of apoplexy. He had scarcely recovered when though, weak and feeble, he insisted in visiting the sick, but he was soon unable to live except in seclusion. At last, notwithstanding the enlightened attentions of his numerous pupils, who surrounded his dying pillow, a final attack carried him off October 25, 1826. At the news of this sad event there was a universal cry of grief throughout the vast precincts of the hospital. Deputations of the Institute, the Academy, and the Faculty were present at his funeral obsequies. In the midst of the solemn procession, increased by the medical officers of the hospital, and by persons of all classes, groups of the sick, and even of paralytic persons, crawled along to the place of interment. Men of science, in their discourses, rendered homage to his genius; the poor, by their lamentations, rendered homage to his virtue.

Pinel was twice married. He left a widow and two sons, who regarded the name which they bear as the best part of their inheritance.*

* Translated from the Eloge of Pariset, delivered to the members of the Académie Royale de Médecine.

LETTER TO PHILIP PINEL.

“Since a mental disease which is formed during life is often abated before death,* so the least that death can do is fully to remove it.

“Who is more deserving than the physician of the insane, that martyr of suffering humanity, if he himself should become deranged, of having his return to sanity celebrated.

“The labourer in lead-works is thankful if he escapes lameness, and the medical attendant in madhouses if he does not there leave his reason.† A more deliberate sacrifice to the mightiest good of mankind is not conceivable; the world, however, takes but little note of it, it speaks unsympathisingly of the mad-doctor, amuses itself with the caprices of the insane, and reserves its interest for the madmen who wander about free.

“You learned to know the warfare of life in all its rigour, and it may have been strange to you, when struck with apoplexy, after recovering consciousness,‡ to look

* Tulpius has already remarked (*Monita Medica*, lxxii, ed. Objs. Lugd. Bat. 1739, p. 391), “*Qui mentis suae aliquamdiu fuit impos, sub finem vitae saepius ad se redit.*” Schröder von der Kolk (on the distinction between matter, the vital principle, and the soul, from the Dutch of Albers, Bonn, 1836, 8), mentions a case in his practice in which a chronic insane patient was, shortly before death, brought gradually to himself by the sufferings of the body, and in proportion as death opened to his view, the long oppressed self-consciousness returned.

† A. Müller (physician to the insane in the Julius Hospital at Würzburg, 1824, s. 187) says, “I am at length rewarded, since, after twenty-six years’ intercourse with the insane, I have not become insane myself.”

* Pariset (*Eloge de Pinel*, in the *Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Medicine*, in 1823), “il eut une premier attaque d’apoplexie . . .

back on this career full of mental derangement. The ebb and flow of human happiness were experienced by you in their widest extent. No one attained a fuller conviction that all is vain, except the consciousness of innocence and a pure devotion to the good of others. So long as a friendly star lighted you, you were the interpreter of the unintelligible voice of the soul, the advocate of misunderstood sufferers, and the reformer of misfortune.

"One of your most valued pupils, who, in a fit of derangement, fled into a wood in the evening and was torn by the wolves, first awakened your interest in the study of mental disease;* and your whole mind and heart were thenceforth directed to the contradictory propensities and passions of lacerated humanity.

"He who walks in an odoriferous flower-garden, which had formerly been a pestilential swamp, will best be able to appreciate what you effected in madhouses. Formerly an atmosphere almost stifling, damp rooms, the clank of chains, the cries of those under the lash, the hoarse growl of the rough attendants, the desperate frenzy of the ill-used patients; these succeeded by clean apartments, the greatest humanity in personal attentions, and an atmosphere of peace and confidence throughout the whole establishment.†

bientôt il ne put vivre que pour la retraite. . . . Une dernière attaque l'enleva le 25 Octobre, 1826."

* Pariset says, p. 199, "Il est probable que ce fut cet événement qui tourna ces idées vers l'étude d'un genre de maladie si bizarre, si effrayant, et si mal connu jusque-là."

† The same, p. 201. "Il entra en fonction dans les derniers mois de 1792, et avec lui la pitié, les égards, les ménagemens, la bonté, la justice; procédés ou plutôt vertus dont il avait reconnu le double empire sur les furieux les plus forcenés."

Cuvier (*Eloges Historiques*, t. iii, p. 398) expresses himself thereon, "On n'eut pas, du moins, la barbarie de traiter des hommes innocens comme des bêtes féroces."

"As you were to the sick a guardian angel, so to learners you were an intelligent teacher, and to your contemporary medical brethren a model of spotless morality.*

"Such a man lived long enough even if his life was short ; his labours are not to be reckoned by hours ; the heroic death of him who has convinced others, even if it comes early, is the noblest that a man can wish for.

"Every fresh generation of rescued patients recognizes more completely the worth of the founder of new laws, the compassion and the labour of that archangel who slew the dragon of prejudice.

"Often when I have read your writings and pursued your train of ideas, my communion with you has taken the form of a dialogue ; if I have now chosen another form of thinking of you, it is but a fresh attempt to approach your existence and to catch your words.

"Your earlier labours, properly to distinguish the sick heart from the evil one, the weak judgment from the complete want of judgment, the involuntary impulse from the malicious intention, are not yet completed. Every case which in this respect calls upon us for decision, shows anew the difficulty of an unprejudiced judgment.

"Since men are governed by times and seasons, and the animal nature is like a Titan, only quelled by the thunders of Heaven, it is conceivable that in its enforced captivity it will seize every opportunity to free itself. Physical excitement is often so purely physical, that it is hard to

* Esquirol (on the proposal to inaugurate the bust of Pinel in the hall where the Academy held their sittings), in his *Mémoires*, tom. i, p. 229, says of him : "Toujours l'ennemi de l'intrigue, des coteries, des cabales. Il avait trop de noblesse dans le caractère, pour descendre à ces moyens. . . . M. Pinel (he concludes, p. 231) eut le génie d'un grand homme, et les vertus d'un homme de bien. Il fut une des grandes illustrations du siècle par ses écrits, par son enseignement et par ses qualités morales."

say whether it is the result of an orgasm, of a fever, or a rousing of the spirit.

“Between the thoughtless curiosity of the child who destroys his dearest plaything and the deliberate purpose of the adult who does violence to his better judgment there is an affinity; both have their origin in the deficiency of a solid, well-grounded judgment.

“Every delusion is the result of confused modes of thinking; wrong and crime originate in ignorance. Physicians who labour to stop up the fountains of physical evil are not merely the guardians of health and the ministers of diseased nature, but the champions of peace of mind and virtue. These pure qualities are not put to the proof, not because they are not the best, but because one ought not to declare, or prove which are the best.

“Psychology still expects its Meckel, who might demonstrate that bad men are to be considered as standing in their development in a lower grade. Such an unfortunate person is to be pitied, not blamed.

“He who takes the things of this world naturally as a general rule, preserves his mental strength unimpaired. Naturalists are seldom found inmates of lunatic asylums. The more any one accustoms himself to regard all things as even misfortune, teologically, and to inquire invariably after the *cui bono* will be able to endure all the situation of life with the greater equanimity.

“Many are puzzled to know what may be allowed to human nature; for instance, the impulse to injure what is dearest, as this may express itself in an indifference to the individual's own health, or towards his nearest relatives and in a rending of the most intimate connexions. The wise man sees in this impulse an inducement to accustom mortal man to the transitory, to the loss of their dearest possessions, either by conflagration, inundation, calumny or war.

“It is less necessary to be reasonable than to convince others that we are so. Many a one is unjustly considered a fool, and many a real fool escapes unsuspected. Fortunately a medical opinion is not always required. Ulysses having been warned by an oracle that he would be kept away from his home twenty years by a war, feigned himself mad when Palamedes came to invite him to the expedition against Troy. He put on a hat, contrary to the custom of the country, yoked an ass and an ox together to his plough, and strewed salt in the furrows. But Palamedes laid the infant Telemachus in the furrow, when the father turned aside the plough, and betrayed himself. Sophocles wrote the *Œdipus Coloneus* to prove himself of right mind.

“The most which men undertake is done to show themselves to advantage, but when their success in this respect is but little evident to themselves and others, it follows that they are looked upon as madmen, and as they imagine themselves wise, they may represent, in a reduced scale, a madhouse. For these reasons, those who are insane in a high degree should meet with general forbearance, sympathy, and cordial succour. Just as public security is left to the police, so is general compassion left to physicians. How it may become too much for them, in spite of all self-sacrifice, your example may show.

“Good-will and a kindly feeling any one may have, but he only deserves commendation who uses these aright. The way to a right estimate and execution results from a right judgment of our own doings and omissions.

“Youth and age have sometimes opposite opinions upon what is thought, as author and reader have upon what is printed. If reviewers were to be relied upon in their judgments as to what is rational or what is not, as much as the physicians of the insane are, many a paper-mill must stand still. If it is difficult to form a cool

judgment on what occurs in our waking hours and in calm reason, how much more so to judge of the freaks of humour, of fancy, or dreams? I know not to this hour whether what I once wrote* on the language of the body and the origin of colloquial speech, upon proverbs and mode of expression, is wise or foolish.

“Since the work in which I betrayed the marks of slumbering consciousness came into few hands in this country, I can the more easily presume that you took little notice of it. Whether I shall succeed in a like trial at some future day is a question. Richter† relates of a Gottingen student, that he played the harpsichord better asleep than awake.

[Professor Marx then proceeds to give, as it appears, some specimens of his observations on language alluded to, consisting of a string of puns, or phrases, relating to the body, used to express actions of the mind, but which phrases would lose all their intelligibility in translation. He then concludes.]

“Man does well to turn all his strength, as all his love, upon those who understand and appreciate him; that which lies beyond space and time he must calmly and hopefully leave to Him who has created all things, inconceivable as they may be, for himself. Our language is the language of earth—even here a foreigner hears in vain many expressions most significant to him who utters them, and how much more must this be the case with him who has turned his back on earthly matters.

“He who has stripped off the earthly may probably stand in a relation to earth incomprehensible to us.”

* In my ‘Erinnerungen an England.’ Brunswick, 1842.

† Medico-Chirurgical Remarks, B. ii, p. 123.

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO PINEL.

The subjects touched upon in this letter would, if fully developed and illustrated, carry us into the province of the medical jurist, and involve some of the most difficult questions, namely, the positive indications of insanity, its availableness as a plea in criminal cases, and the relation which eccentricities bear to unsoundness of mind. It would be impossible in a volume like this to do justice to such important topics, we shall content ourselves with offering a few brief inquiries as to how the subject bears morally on the duties of the physician.

Our author remarks, in one part of his letter, that "every delusion is the result of confused modes of thinking, wrong and crime originate in ignorance."*

The exact point at which ignorance ends and conscious violation of duty begins is not perhaps given to human judgment accurately to define, the Omniscient Judge alone can fully do justice to all; there is doubtless a time when he, whose object has been ever to deceive and blind others, succeeds in deceiving and blinding himself. Mr. Winslow, in his 'Plea of Insanity in Criminal Cases,' says, on the subject of disease of the moral perception, "how many maniacs of this description are let loose upon society. As long as the *intellectual* faculties are sound, and the person manifests no delusion of *mind*, the law does not recognize the existence of any malady requiring coercive treatment. A man may, under the influence of disease of his moral powers, commit acts of extravagance, ruin himself and his family, become involved in all kinds of difficulties, indulge in habits destructive to both body and

* Jeder Wahn ist Folge der unklaren Denkens Unrecht und Verbrechen stammen aus Unwissenheit.

mind, and no restrictive or protective powers are adopted to save him from inevitable ruin. The absence of all hallucination or perversion of the mental powers, is the only thing that saves such a person from the madhouse. Let his moral disorder be accompanied with the slightest derangement of *mind*, let the person imagine that he is commissioned by some unseen agent to perform certain acts, and he is immediately brought within the cognizance of the law; but until he manifests some degree of intellectual insanity, he is permitted to go at large with impunity, and is considered by the world to be perfectly sane. A person addicted to habits of intemperance is often heard to deplore the loss of all control over his vicious propensities, and to confess that he is only fit for a gaol or a lunatic asylum. Such individuals in their lucid intervals, when the fit is off, reason calmly, rationally, and sometimes with considerable power; but they are, to all intents and purposes, unfit to have the management of themselves. It is the consideration of such cases that induces me to lament the want of establishments between a prison and a madhouse."

Professor Marx, in another part of the letter, humorously observes, that the world itself is only a madhouse on a larger scale. In the case of Miss Baxter, in the year 1832, the celebrated Dr. Haslam was examined by Sir Frederick Pollock, when the following curious dialogue took place. "Is Miss Baxter of sound mind?" Dr. Haslam. "I never saw any human being who was of sound mind." "That is no answer to my question: is she of sound mind?" "I presume the Deity is of sound mind, and he alone." "Is Miss Baxter of sound mind?" "Competently sound." "Is she capable of managing herself and her affairs?" "I do not know what affairs she has to manage."

With this ingenious evasion of the question, we may contrast Dr. Conolly's clear and practical distinction be-

tween sound and unsound mind : “Undoubtedly, we call a man sound in mind so long as his reasoning faculty restrains his affections and propensities within certain bounds, which are universally acknowledged ; and so long as his external and internal perceptions accord with those of the rest of mankind, or *are known by him to differ from those generally experienced.*”

These last words appear to us to point out an important element in the case of moral as well as of intellectual insanity. He who does wrong, knowing or suspecting that his conduct is not in accordance with acknowledged standards of right, is morally guilty. He who does wrong, ignorant of those standards, or really believing that he is conforming to them, may, to that extent, perhaps come under the class of the morally insane. But who is to decide in such nice points ? It is obvious that society must be guided by certain broad general rules, leaving the exact apportionment of moral desert to Him who alone can penetrate the secrets of the heart.

How then do these questions bear on the *ethical* relations of medicine ?

First, there is the great importance of medical men generally striving to acquire more correct knowledge of the nature of insanity. Dr. Conolly says, on this subject, “Circumstances daily come to my knowledge which show that the improved treatment, now happily prevalent in most of the public asylums of England, has not met with much favour in the management of private cases, nor even in asylums for the richer classes, in many of which harsh and insulting treatment of the patients by improper attendants, and even severe modes of bodily restraint are still needlessly permitted, or wantonly resorted to, uncontrolled by any existing system of visitation, and perhaps not capable of control by any mere official inspection. The true remedy for these practices will be a more intimate

acquaintance on the part of medical men with the nature of insanity, and the manner in which it is influenced and modified by different kinds of treatment; for this, until very recently, no opportunities have been afforded to them. Private practice affords no means of making up the deficiency in medical study arising from the very limited admission of students to asylums for the insane. Attendance on a case of mental disorder, in ordinary practice, is usually of short duration. It cannot be watched through its various stages, and the treatment and prognosis occasion an anxiety which is renewed by every new case. Nothing but the experience to be obtained in a lunatic asylum of a certain extent, can suffice to furnish the knowledge of mental disorders already possessed by the student concerning other maladies, and sufficient to give him confidence in laying down positive rules of treatment of any kind. Yet, in such cases, the questions to be decided are of wide range and importance; for insanity affects the social usefulness and private happiness of individuals and families; and it is often essential to the welfare of many persons to decide whether a career of activity and ambition must at once be suspended; whether it can ever be resumed; whether a husband, a wife, a parent, a child, must be taken away from all who love them; and all social and domestic relations and arrangements ought to be changed. Alarmed by an unwonted set of symptoms, and by general as well as medical dangers and responsibilities, the practitioner allows a great part of the management of the patient to be regulated by attendants, many of whom are ignorant of all methods of treatment but force and severity; and, finding the malady becoming exasperated, he is desirous to be relieved from the case as expeditiously as possible, and almost in any way. Any one keeping a private lunatic-house is then thankfully trusted to, generally at the recommendation of the attendants; and thus

the fate of the insane often becomes most lamentable. A just suspicion on the part of the public, that the treatment in such houses was often very injudicious—that very little discrimination was exercised respecting the kind of cases sent to asylums—that in some cases recovery was retarded, in some prevented, in some concealed—led to errors and evils of an opposite kind, which are even now frequent. Not a year passes without some cases being reported to me in which necessary interference is withheld; property is wasted, families are kept in terror and wretchedness, or disgraced; and all are afraid to take the steps required for the safety of those about the lunatic, or for his own protection.”

The greater facilities now afforded by the increased admission of students into lunatic asylums, and the admirable clinical lectures of Conolly and others, will, doubtless, in a future generation of medical men, go far towards remedying the evils thus forcibly and judiciously pointed out.

It is peculiarly the province of the medical practitioner to watch the first insidious advances of mental malady, and a thoughtful and judicious man will often have it in his power to avert or retard the calamity, by a prudent estimation of the probable effect of certain events or circumstances on the peculiar temperament of those with whom he is medically in contact, and to give timely warning, suggesting change of scene and rest to the mind overburdened with excessive mental application, or overwhelmed by bereavement and affliction, and delicately enforcing on those around the necessity of caution and watchfulness. How many valuable lives might have been spared had friends and medical attendants taken early alarm! To instance one only—had it occurred to those about the noble and amiable Sir Samuel Romilly, that the loss of a wife, loved with almost romantic tenderness, was likely to upset a mind already overwrought by excessive mental labour,

measures might, perhaps, have been adopted to prevent his committing an act which robbed society of one of its brightest ornaments.

Such unwearied exertion and overwhelming sorrow, without any counteracting influence on which the mind can repose or obtain support, must ever place it in imminent danger, for those laws are infringed by which alone the mind and body can continue in a healthy state. "All disobedience," says Dr. Moore, in his 'Power of the Soul over the Body,' "to the Divine laws, whether natural or moral, must of course be inevitably followed by suffering and disorder; nor can any one who exposes himself to its causes be exempt, unless by miracle, from insanity or hallucination, as long as mind acts through matter, and manifests itself in keeping with its condition."

There is another case which may be considered as allied to insanity, the case, namely, of nervous and hypochondriac patients. In these the patience, kindness, and forbearance of a medical man are especially tried. He should endeavour, before all things, to gain his patient's confidence, and to be looked upon as a friend; and, as Gisborne says,* "how can he be looked upon as a friend unless his manners are characterised by kindness and compassion, not the delusive appearance of a concern which he does not feel, but that genuine and sober tenderness springing from the cultivation of habitual benevolence, which, while it wins the affection and cheers the spirits of the patient, stimulates his adviser to exert every faculty of mind for his relief. And what but this equable mildness of disposition, cultivated on scriptural principles, will effectually teach the physician to bear with patience the wayward humours, and to treat with gentleness the groundless prejudices which he must continually encounter in a sick chamber."

* Duties of Men.

“One of the most important points,” says Simon, speaking of invalids of this class, “is to seize the character of the patients and to detect the theory which they have formed of their complaint, and never, if possible, to let fall a word which shall appear to contradict himself. It is even useful to know that there are hypochondriacs who will propose to him insidious questions, with the view of discovering if he is in earnest in his prescriptions, and he ought to be on his guard against falling into snares of this kind.” “There is no malady” says Simon, in conclusion, “which imposes on the medical man obligations so delicate. If he is not guided in the practice of his art by a true philanthropy and a deep sentiment of duty, he may sport here in the most cruel manner with human sensibility. On the one hand, he will make of hypochondriasis a shameful object of speculation, on the other, not being able to make a lucrative traffic of it, he will be brought to look upon it as a purely imaginary evil, and will laugh at it rather than treat it in a serious manner. In neither case will he do the work of man or the work of science.”

It may be expected that disease will produce a depressing effect upon weak minds, and we should not feel surprised if they exaggerate the severity of their malady and its apprehended danger. It is cruel to hurt the feelings of such persons by unnecessary harshness, whilst, on the other hand, judgment must be exercised so as not to encourage and pander to their morbid sensibility. A pleasing example of the way in which professional counsel may be aided by moral incentives, in cases of hypochondriacal malady, is given in the following little note of Dr. Burder, to a patient apparently thus affected. “I must also earnestly entreat my patient most steadily to resolve to resist to the utmost every unfounded idea of inability to walk, or use other moderate exertion, remembering that we are not warranted in expecting the Divine blessing on medical

treatment, unless we ourselves employ all the means we possess of counteracting morbid feelings and vain imaginations. And surely, where an inability of resisting such painful apprehensions is deplored, it is our duty to seek and humbly to expect strength from Him, 'who giveth power to the faint, and who raiseth up them that are bowed down.' But then we must do our best, and not *yield* to visionary fears." Dr. Marshall Hall has pointed out what may be called a variety of hypochondriasis, which he terms the *Temper disease*. He says, "it is a species of aberration of the intellect, but short of insanity, real enough, but exaggerated, fictitious, factitious, and real, at the same time. It frequently has its origin in dyspepsia, hysteria, or other malady, and in emotion of various kinds, such as disappointment, vexation, &c. Its object is frequently to excite and to maintain a state of active sympathy and attention, for which there is, as it were, a perpetual, morbid, and dangerous thirst. It was rather aptly designated by the clever relative of one patient, an *ego mania*." In these perplexing cases great wisdom, gentleness, knowledge of mankind, and elevated principle, are required by the practitioner to detect the disease, and to apply the proper treatment, which, as Dr. Hall excellently observes, lies in "mental discipline, in raising the ideas above the former standard, and fixing them upon some more elevated view than that point which has occupied them."

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF DR. RICHARD MEAD.

How late I shuddered on the brink! how late
Life called for her last refuge in despair;
That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe—
Fain would I pay thee with eternity,
But ill my genius answers my desire;
My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure;
Accept the will that dies not with my strain.

YOUNG.

Matthew Mead, the father of Dr. Mead, was a person well known in religious history. He was the author of the 'Almost Christian Discovered,' and other works, and was one of the two thousand ministers ejected from their livings on St. Bartholomew's Day, by the Act of Uniformity, during the reign of Charles II. Up to that time Matthew Mead had been parish minister of Stepney, and after his ejection he continued to preach to a congregation of Nonconformists in the same place, and at Stepney his son Richard was born, August 11, 1673. In 1683 the aged minister was accused of entertaining some treasonable designs against the government, and obliged to retreat into Holland, where Richard also went to complete his studies at the University of Utrecht under Grævius. Having subsequently studied for three years at Leyden, where Boerhaave was his fellow-student, and Pitcairn his tutor, he made, according to the prevailing fashion, the

tour of Europe, in company with Dr. Pellet, afterwards President of the London College of Physicians. At Padua he took the degree of Doctor, and returning to England in 1696, commenced practice at Stepney. In 1701 he published his work on Poisons. There is in it a degree of reserve in speaking of certain substances, which is easily traceable to the prevalence at that time of secret poisoning in Europe. He afterwards wrote on the Influence of the Sun and Moon upon Human Bodies, and having presented to the Royal Society an analysis of Bonomo's Letter on the Cutaneous Worms which generate the Itch, he was elected a fellow of that society. In 1703 he was chosen physician of St. Thomas's Hospital, and was appointed by the Company of Surgeons to read anatomical lectures in their hall. The University of Oxford conferred on him a doctor's degree in 1707, and in 1716 he became a fellow of the College of Physicians. Mead was now in extensive practice, and had a warm and firm friend in Dr. Radcliffe, to whose practice, and house in Bloomsbury-square he succeeded at his death. Two days before the death of Queen Anne, Radcliffe being confined by the gout, Mead was summoned to the royal patient to give his opinion on her case. Justly considering it a delicate thing to pronounce on the approaching demise of so illustrious a person, especially in the then state of parties, he merely advised that a faithful account of the symptoms should be sent to Hanover, by which he well knew the physicians of that court would prognosticate the fatal issue. He was employed to attend the family of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Second, and when that monarch succeeded to the throne he appointed him to be his own physician. During his attendance on him as Prince of Wales in 1721, he was deputed by him to superintend the inoculation of some condemned criminals; the experiment succeeded, and the criminals were set at liberty. In 1747

he published a treatise on Smallpox and Measles, in Latin. He also wrote a short discourse concerning pestilential contagion, &c., in which he gave directions as to a system of medical police for preventing the spread of the plague which, being then at Marseilles, was much dreaded in England. When Mr. Sutton's invention for expelling foul air from ships and other places was made public, it was mainly through the influence of Dr. Mead that the Admiralty was induced to adopt it.

Dr. Mead was a Whig, and had considerable influence with the then dominant party in the state. His generous use of this influence in the case of Dr. Friend, is quoted in the letter. Dr. Friend had been committed to prison on suspicion of treasonable practices on behalf of the House of Stuart. Mead made many attempts to procure his discharge, but in vain, till being called in to attend Sir Robert Walpole, he made his friend's release the *sine qua non* of his attendance. The minister surrendered, and Friend was liberated; and, at an entertainment given at Mead's house to celebrate this event, the generous host put into the hands of his friend a bag containing 5000 guineas, being the amount of fees which he had received for him during his incarceration. It appears that Mead was consulted in the case of Queen Caroline, and that her death was hastened by an unsuccessful operation which was performed upon her by Dr. Sands, and contrary to the express opinion of Dr. Mead, who entered a decided protest against the measure.

Dr. Mead was a munificent patron of literature and the arts, and was intimately acquainted with the wits and poets of the day. Pope was a frequent guest at his table, and has commemorated his medical friend and attendant in the well-known lines—

“ Alive by miracle, or what is more—
Alive by Mead.”

A similar tribute from Young is given at the head of this notice. He was often solicited to recommend physicians to public situations, as he was remarkably careful and conscientious in these recommendations. He was rich, for he began with a private fortune, and the average annual receipts of his practice amounted, for several years, to between six or seven thousand pounds, at a time when money was much greater in value than in our day. His charity and hospitality were free and ample, and he spent largely on his own tastes. In his house in Great Ormond street he had a spacious gallery filled with the treasures of art and literature. The catalogue of his library contained 6592 separate volumes, and his pictures sold, after his death, for 3400*l*. Besides this he had splendid collections of statues, prints, drawings, coins, and articles of vertu. He corresponded with all the principal men of letters in Europe, and in the decline of his life he received an invitation to visit the King of Naples, and inspect the newly-discovered city of Herculaneum, an invitation his advanced age compelled him to decline. He was, indeed, a remarkable instance of medical prosperity; and it has been said of him by Pettigrew, that of all physicians who had ever flourished he gained the most, spent the most, and enjoyed the highest favour during his lifetime, not only in his own but in foreign countries. He composed, in the decline of life, his '*Medica Sacra*,' or commentary on the most remarkable diseases mentioned in the Bible, and his *Medical Precepts and Cautions* still later. He died on the 10th of February, 1754, aged eighty-one years. He had been the Mæcenas of his day, and amongst the benefits which he conferred on posterity was that of inducing the wealthy citizen Guy to bequeath his fortune to found the hospital which bears his name.

LETTER TO RICHARD MEAD.

“It is a common saying that the king never dies, because he is immediately replaced ; with equal justice may we say that a great man never dies, because he cannot be replaced.

“Having known and admired you for years, I turn to you, the object of my highest veneration, as to an old acquaintance. That we have never seen each other is nothing to the point. The blind never see their parents, the deaf never hear a brother's voice, and many see and commune with one another daily without ever really knowing each other.

“When a person like me writes to another so late in the day, it is to be presumed that he has made himself acquainted not merely with the whole man and his achievements, but also with his ‘times,’ that chief of reagents, and blowpipe of events. The most accurate analysis brings out to our view the finished scholar, the distinguished practitioner, and the man of noble mind. It is to address the last mentioned alone that I take up my pen.

“Of the many things which I have heard related of you, nothing has so much pleased me as your friendly conduct towards your schoolfellow Friend. He would have long lain in the Tower, to which his too bold speeches in 1722 against the government as a member of parliament had consigned him, had not you obliged the minister Walpole to set him at liberty. Not satisfied with this, you handed over to him £5000, received as fees for him in the interval of his imprisonment.

“The pious reflections which this genuine scriptural occurrence* suggest are these, that you were not induced by

* In the ‘*Medica Sacra*,’ which you wrote after fifty years’ practice, you say, in the commencement of the preface: “*Scripta sacra, ut*

envy to wish a fellow-physician a thousand miles off, or even in the land of shadows, but that you were desirous of having him near you, and that you gave up to him a sum for fees which in any other country would scarcely be accumulated during a long life, even with the help of government salaries, patrimony, and every legitimate service.

“If a German physician is right,* who derives his word life (*leben*) from body (*leib*), thus making life to depend upon a material form, I may as certainly reckon on an answer from you, as the enamoured sighs of a youth can expect a hearing from his goddess who has never yet heard of his existence.

“Since, however, I have no reason to raise doubts as to your living sympathy in the continuing occurrences of this life, so I hesitate not to follow the inclination of my heart, and to touch upon some circumstances in medical life. To whom could I with more hope of information address myself as to a recognized authority, than to a member of the College.

“There are medical men who, from the first moments of their entrance on a practical career, take up a warfare against the old colleges, with a view of proving that *they* stand on their own footing, and sprang fully qualified from Jupiter’s head. If they do not all think of Minerva’s bird,†

hominem Christianum decet, frequentius evolvi;” and at the end of the same: “*Fidem Christianam ab omnibus suis cultoribus id in primis exigere liquet, ut quaevis humanitatis ac benevolentiae officia sibi invicem praestent.*”

* Carus Physiology. Dresden, 1838.

† They might do this, in so far that the owl is considered by superstitious persons the bird of death. So says Robert Willan, ‘Miscellaneous Works,’ London, 1821, viii, p. 380. Edited by Ashby Smith. “There came at times owls, during their midnight wanderings, to the spot where in a sick chamber a single light was burning, and the loud cry by which they invited their companions was ignorantly taken for a bad omen.”

they at least applaud the alligator which bites the moment it creeps out of its egg. Sir Humphrey Davy notices, in his charming literary recreation, that scientific idyl 'Salmonia,'* that in Ceylon this animal, scarcely out of its shell, on being touched with a stick, takes an angry and threatening attitude, and bites fiercely at its assailant.

"The fault indeed often lies with the seniors, the established physicians, who look upon new practitioners as interlopers, or as leeches, upon whom salt can scarcely be sprinkled fast enough.

"This apparently heartless proceeding cannot be precisely called envy, but rather a necessity which springs out of the nature of the relation. As many persons as like may study theology or jurisprudence, yet the livings or offices which they are in hopes of filling remain the same in number; the candidates can create no more situations, nor is it permitted that they should share them with others. This acts, in the course of years, as a check on the number of candidates. But it is different in the medical profession. Their proportion to the population is not controlled by law; in the larger towns as many may settle as choose, and thus a division and splitting of connexion are unavoidable.

"The increase in the number of medical men makes an increase of forbearance imperative; they themselves ought to seek to lighten life to each other, since circumstances do not do it. The esteem of the world will follow their mutual reconciliation and amity. Therefore, away with all malicious feelings and the poison of the tongue!

"If this last crime were to be punished, it were well that another Remigius† should arise as an annalist. He relates

* Davy's Collected Works. Edited by John Davy. London, 1840, 8vo, vol. ix, p. 107.

† You speak of poisoning (*Medica Sacra*) towards the end of the treatise: "*Ecquis credat quenquam sanæ mentis voluisse, id sibi*

that in Lorraine alone, in the course of fifteen years, 900 were executed for witchcraft or secret arts.

“Discord and strife are unworthy of the science of healing; war is only a disease.* Harmony and open honesty should be the symbol of professional intercourse. Hogarth, indeed, in his ‘Analysis of Beauty,’ speaks of the serpentine line as the line of beauty; but in common life the straight line is to be preferred to the crooked one.

“It appears, moreover, that, apart from all motives of interest, of ambition, or of vanity, the want of union and mutual confidence amongst medical men consists in this, that their position and character are various, and that this stamps a distinct type upon the deportment of each. Domestic physicians, court physicians, physicians of the insane, army and navy surgeons, country doctors, spa doctors, &c., medical authors, and writers on sanitary regulations, medical lecturers, &c., exhibit so many separate modifications, that one is often inclined to exalt the species into a genus. It is a pity that Chodviccki has not represented them with his pencil as he has done the clerical profession in his ‘Sebaldus Nothanker.’

Then only do we imitate the benevolence of the grave when we express ourselves of one yet living in the way in

laudi ducere, quod nongentos circiter veneficii reos, intra annos quindecim, in unica Lotharingiæ provincia, ipse capitis damnasset?” only indeed the purport of the book is different: “*Nicolai Remigii Daemonalatreiæ libri tres. Ex judiciis capitalibus nongentorum plus minus hominum, qui sortilegii crimen intra annos quindccim in Lotharingia capite luerunt.*” *Coloniæ Agrippinæ, 1596. 8.*

* Benjamin Rush has written (*Natural History of Medicine among the Indians*—in his *Inquiries*, 5 Ed. vol. i, Philadelphia, 1818, p. 66): “War is nothing but a disease; it is founded on the imperfection of political bodies, just as fevers are founded on the weakness of the animal body.”

which the tombstone of William Buttlert† speaks of him, and says that we have seen him in whom health is found.

“It is not necessary that a man should sacrifice his nature, one can be independent without giving pain. Neither need we look upon active restless characters as dangerous, their excitability works for those who travel in beaten paths, like sour leaven or like caprification. For instance, a wild fig tree is set in the neighbourhood of the cultivated trees, that the insects from the wild one may pierce the buds of the others and cause them to ripen more quickly.

“During my stay in your native country I was often impressed with the beneficial influence of collegiate institutions, and of the independent position of medical men. These enviable possessions, combining with regular domestic arrangements, an elegance in all attendant circumstances, and a steady advancement in human undertakings, affected me with a real home sickness after that isle, of which, as of the isle of the blest, your greatest poet sings—

This happy breed of men, this little world;

This precious stone set in the silver sea.

(Richard II. Act ii.)

“Certainly you would now find the land, as the inhabitants, more beautiful than ever, as the smallpox inoculation, which in the year 1721 you performed on the heir to the throne, has since then, by means of your countryman Jenner, to the great joy of all, undergone a remarkable metamorphosis.

“Whether climate, the culture of the earth, and public morals were on that account at that time essentially changed, you will best be able to inform us, since you took much interest in that class of subjects, as may be seen by your tract

† “Abi viator, et ad tuos reversus, narra te vidisse locum, in quo salus jacet.” J. Aikin, *a Specimen of the Medical Biography of Great Britain*. London, 1775. 4to, p. 16.

on the Influence of the Sun and Moon on the Human Body and on Disease.

“Gilbert Blane* was of opinion that the ungenial climate of England was in itself a cause of the moral and physical excellence of its inhabitants. Necessity, and the resolution to make the best of those advantages which nature had distributed but sparingly, had thus obtained their influence from unfavorable outward circumstances.

“The victory of the will over matter is there everywhere apparent. Amongst my agreeable recollections, I place a stroll in the neighbourhood of London as far as Highgate with a friend, where at leisure we enjoyed the influence of retirement. You will remember that this was the place where, at a former period, the greatest thinker of England was struck by the angel of death on the first day of Easter, 1626. Lord Bacon was riding there with his household physician, Dr. Wilberborne. Snow was on the ground, and an idea struck him that it might be used to preserve meat from putrefaction like salt. Immediately they dismounted, went into a cottage close by, bought a fowl, had it drawn, and then stuffed it with snow. In this occupation Bacon became so unwell, that he was immediately afterwards compelled to go to bed, and in a few days after expired.

“The peculiarity and remarkable character of the natives occasioned me to make a reflection from which I will no more wander. There appears to be in England a kind of necessity to know the contrary side of everything which is revered and admired. They are as eager for the caricature

* Remarks on the comparative health of England at different periods in his ‘Select Dissertations,’ London, 1822. 8vo, p. 159 : “It would not be difficult to prove that the strenuous exertion of mind and body called forth to counteract this apparent unkindness of nature, have been the essential causes of that superiority of character which distinguishes the inhabitants of this island, as well as of that pre-eminent power, prosperity, and happiness which they enjoy.”

as for the original. This seems to brace them like a cold sea-bath against a diseased sensibility. Their seriousness calls forth humour, their spirit of contradiction, satire. Out of the great they extract the ludicrous, not to trample it to the dust, but to survey it on the other side, to preserve themselves from over-valuing it, and to maintain a fitting moderation with regard to it.

“It is to you that the medical body is in a great measure indebted for the high esteem which they enjoy in that kingdom, and as there is an invisible church in science as well as in religion, even a foreigner may on this account be grateful to you.

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO DR. MEAD.

Those who are acquainted with Professor Marx's lively and graphical description of his visit to England, entitled ‘*Erinnerungen an England*,’ are no strangers to the kind and friendly interest which he always exhibited in English institutions, and amongst these his admiration was, it would seem, peculiarly excited by those ancient seats of learning, Oxford and Cambridge. He says of the former,* “There are impressions of the mind which, like moral events, seize the

* “Es giebt sinnliche Eindrücke, die wie moralische Ereignisse den ganzen Menschen ergreifen und als etwas Neues Grosses in seine Lebensgeschichte eintreten. So mir der Anblick von Oxford. Noch nie hat eine Stadt von einem verhältnissmässig so gernigen Umfange einem so mächtigen, kaum zu beschreibenden Zauber auf mich ausgeübt. Das ist eine Residenz der Studien; hier thronen Professoren und die Studenten mit Barrett und Talar schreiten wie Cavaliere einher. In ganz Deutschland, in der ganzen Welt ist kein anziehlicher Punkt . . . Ich finde hier ein allgemeines Gefühl von Selbstständigkeit, Unabhängigkeit, Zufriedenheit, wie man solches anderswo auf Universitäten in jetziger, dem unabhängigen Gelehrtenstande so ungünstigen Zeit nicht leicht antrifft.” (*Erinnerungen an England*, pp. 159, 165.)

whole man, and appear in the history of his life like something great and new. Such was to me the sight of Oxford. Never yet has a city relatively so small exercised over me so mighty, so indescribable a charm. Here is a palace of study; here are enthroned professors; here students in cap and gown parade the streets like so many cavaliers. In all Germany, in all the world there is nothing similar." And again. "I find here a general feeling of independence and contentment, which we shall not easily meet with elsewhere in universities, in these times unfavorable to an independent position for men of letters." Similar remarks occur in the present Letter, addressed appropriately to one who was the associate of the literati, and the munificent patron of the arts; but as the subject of academical foundations does not come within the scope of our purpose, we turn from them to his citation of the well-known anecdote of Mead's generous conduct to Friend, to which he appends many excellent and facetious observations on the jealousy which medical men are too apt to entertain of each other. The anecdote itself may appropriately introduce what we have to say respecting the conduct of practitioners when called to attend for each other.

Dr. Percival says, "Whenever a physician or surgeon officiates for another who is sick or absent during any considerable length of time, he should receive the fees accruing from such additional practice: but if this fraternal act be of short duration it should be gratuitously performed, with an observance always of the utmost delicacy towards the interest and character of the professional gentleman previously connected with the family." Perhaps a better plan would be to divide the fees, and we know many instances in which this is the practice adopted. Dr. Percival's hint as to delicacy towards the character of a former practitioner ought not to be overlooked. It is truly dishonorable to abuse our confidential position with regard to our brother by allow-

ing ourselves to insinuate anything depreciating of his judgment and practice. It is like stabbing in the dark, and though with weak-minded and capricious patients it may sometimes gain a little present advantage, it seldom answers in the end, even as to worldly success.

If, indeed, according to the judgment of the practitioner thus attending for another, the treatment hitherto pursued is erroneous, he is bound by his duty to the patient to adopt a different course, but this he may ordinarily do without awakening suspicion in the mind of the invalid, and weakening his confidence in his regular attendant, and, on resigning the case to him, he will *in general* sufficiently discharge his duty if he fully explains to his medical brother his own view of the treatment required, and his reasons for its adoption. The attendance of a medical man is considered entirely to cease when the practitioner for whom he has been attending resumes the case, and we think it dishonorable, as is sometimes done, to make, subsequently, calls of inquiry, which have at least the appearance of wishing to keep a place in the good graces of the patient.

It sometimes happens that when one medical man has been attending for another that, without the slightest unfairness on his part, or any undue efforts to ingratiate himself, either owing to his real superiority, or to those changes of taste and opinion to which all are liable, the patient or family becomes prepossessed in his favour, in preference to their former attendant, and profess their intention to employ him in future. Perhaps they may have long felt dissatisfaction with their professional adviser, and may have only hesitated to dismiss him from an uncertainty as to whether they should find a successor to whom they could trust—an uncertainty now removed. This, far from being a desirable circumstance, is one of the most painful and difficult positions in which an honor-

able man can be placed. We do not see how he can refuse to attend, for to do so would be to establish a kind of medical despotism, and to say, in effect, to the public, "You shall not change your medical man, or at least you shall not exercise your power of choice in appointing his successor;" and yet a delicate mind could scarcely ever feel secure that some inadvertent word or look on his part may not have operated to the injury of his friend.

We think the only course to be adopted in these very trying circumstances is frankly and candidly to state the matter to the medical man formerly in attendance, and to procure from the patient or family a written statement of their reasons for making a change. This would give opportunity for removing any misunderstanding as to the conduct of the former practitioner, if any such should have occasioned disgust in the mind of the patient, and led to the withdrawal of confidence from him. "But when," says Hufeland, "the sick man has entirely lost confidence in his physician, and is resolved to give himself up to the care of another, the latter dare not and cannot refuse to comply, nor the other take it ill, for the confidence of a man rests with himself and is to be respected." Every conscientious man will, however, desire most earnestly that this confidence should not be withdrawn during the period of his temporary attendance.

Professor Marx comments upon Mead's conduct to Friend as indicative of the total absence of jealousy and envy. Would that such instances of cordial medical friendship were more common! It is gratifying to meet with one in the agreement of Cullen and William Hunter, who associated in partnership, with the understanding that each was alternately to spend the winter in study, the other meanwhile attending to the practice until the education of both was perfected—a true alliance für Kunst und Wissenschaft, as a German would have expressed it.

Cullen was allowed the first choice, and went to Edinburgh to study. The next winter Hunter chose London for the same purpose. His excellence in dissection and in anatomical preparations, while he resided in that city, was so soon discovered, that Dr. Douglas, a lecturer on anatomy and midwifery, chose him as an assistant. On the death of Dr. Douglas, Hunter succeeded him in both his professions, and Cullen, unwilling that an engagement with him should prevent the success of his partner, generously gave up the articles of agreement, and entered into a friendly correspondence with his former associate in business.

“Of all the causes,” says Simon, “which have contributed to lower the medical profession in public esteem, the suspicious jealousy of medical men, their want of a right understanding amongst themselves, which amounts to declared hostility, is the most effectual.” It is lamentable to mark the influence of the baneful passion of jealousy, even in a character of so much worth as that of Fothergill, inciting him to speak disrespectfully of Dr. Leeds, who, being a member of his own religious body, he probably feared might become a rival. Dr. Leeds, thus injured, complained of him to the Society of Friends, and the matter being referred to arbitration, £500 was awarded to Dr. Leeds; but Fothergill appealed to Westminster Hall, and the decision of the arbitrators was nullified. Dr. Leeds afterwards died, it is said, of a broken heart, and the transaction has left a blot on an honorable name, and stands out as a warning to us. “The quarrels of physicians,” says Gregory, “when they end in appeals to the public, generally hurt the contending parties; but what is of more consequence, they discredit the profession, and expose the faculty itself to ridicule and contempt.” “When you come to practice,” says Dr. Hope, in one of the concluding lectures of his course, “be

most careful to shun the habit of depreciating other practitioners. The reflection which invariably flits through the patient's mind, is that envy and jealousy influence you, and thus you not only degrade yourself, but the profession. One who indulges in this habit cannot have a fine perception of the principle of justice. And a slander, nay, an insinuation, a look, a shrug, may be as great an injustice as a direct robbery." "Oh! that I were as able," says Hufeland, "to impress the minds of my brethren with the truism as forcibly as I am penetrated with it: he who degrades a colleague degrades himself and his art. For, in the first place, the more the public becomes acquainted with the faults of physicians, the more will physicians become exposed as contemptible and suspicious, and the more will such exposure impair confidence; and confidence in the whole body being diminished, every single one, and the censurer included, will lose a share of it. The public would be less prone to censure the medical profession, and its faults would not be a favourite topic of conversation if the members themselves did not broach it, and set the bad example. It shows a short-sighted selfishness and want of all common spirit, when a physician acts in such a manner, and thereby hopes to raise himself in the same proportion as he degrades others. Further, such conduct is in opposition to the first principles of morals and religion, which command us not to lay bare the faults of others, but to overlook and excuse them." It is probable that could we look closely into the history of individuals, we should find that those who have acted with peculiar disinterestedness and cordiality towards their brethren have received a reward even in this life. One such example, at least, is on record, that of Mons. Lietaud, physician to Louis XVI. He was long in obscurity at Aix, but observing some inaccuracies in a work which had just been published by Mons. Senac, physician to the king;

he privately communicated with him on the subject, and pointed them out. Senac was so pleased with his conduct that in his next edition he acknowledged his obligation to Lietaud, invited him to Versailles, and introduced him to practice, thereby opening his way to future high honours, — a conduct as honorable to Senac as had been the conduct of Lietaud to him.

Professor Marx has, both in this Letter and in his Aphorisms, many fine reflections on the vice of slander, and one especially, which we must recall to the recollection of our readers. "Slander, like a breath on a mirror, obscures for a moment the image; rub it off, that image is all the brighter;" and assuredly there is always after a time a *reaction* in the mind as to those who have been unduly depressed and depreciated, — a sort of rebound which operates most unfavorably towards the detractor. "Discord and strife," says our author again, "are unworthy of the science of healing." Medical men ought indeed, as he suggests, rather to seek to lighten each other's burdens than to increase them; and they may be of so great service to each other when they cordially co-operate, that mere self-interest might, if they were wise, suffice to teach them the duty of mutual friendliness.

It is a lamentable modification of the disease of jealousy, when it is manifested in a senior practitioner towards a junior. We have already in our remarks on the character of Stieglitz, endeavoured to exhibit the excellence of a contrary feeling. It is an act of great meanness, and utterly unworthy of a *liberal* profession, for a man who has himself attained a high position to forget all his early difficulties, and by a cold and supercilious neglect, perhaps by active hostility, to discourage his younger brethren, and hinder, as much as in him lies, their advancement in life. Dr. Marx has a humorous simile by which he describes the feelings sometimes manifested by seniors

towards juniors; and really it would almost seem as if some practitioners would willingly confine the art of medicine to the present generation. But, seriously speaking, it is a solemn duty in the elder practitioner to encourage the junior in his thorny path, correcting, if opportunity occurs, his deficiencies, but always seeking to aid him amidst the various trying circumstances which beset the early part of a medical career. How much would many a conscientious young man, deeply feeling the responsibilities of his situation, give, with perhaps some anxious case in hand, to be able to go with confidence and frankness to the senior practitioner of the place, and consult him and take his advice in the matter. Instead of this, how often does it happen that he has to act upon his own judgment, not only unaided, but worse,—impeded by the dread of unjust or severe censure. We are not blind to the fact that the young practitioner is often in fault, and deeply so towards his senior brother, and may manifest a self-sufficiency, an impatience of counsel, and an indifference towards the wisdom of experience, which may tend to close the heart of the elder practitioner against him.

We cannot refrain from giving the mutual duties of these two classes in the words of Hufeland. “The young physician will see in the old practitioner maturity of experience; he must try to acquire his confidence and friendship by modesty and a desire of knowledge; to profit by his conversation; and in this he will not only improve himself, but also gain a support of which a young practitioner is much in need. On the other hand, it behoves the old practitioner to respect in the younger one the freshness of his insight, the modern view he has learnt regarding nature and art, &c.: he will remember that he had to travel the same road, and how difficult it was to the beginner, and will not withhold from him that paternal

benevolence, but give to him from the treasure of his experience; point out to him his faults with friendship, palliating and excusing them before the public; especially in case of treatment and consultation in common, he may be cautious and kind, for it is here that a word from the old master may be decisive of the fate of the young man."

Professor Marx attributes, and no doubt justly, much of the jealousy of medical men to the crowded state of the profession, and the excessive competition thereby engendered. In Bavaria, as is well known, there is a limitation to the number of practitioners, and no person is allowed to practise till it is ascertained that there is a vacancy for him. The inspector of each district is compelled to keep a list of all the doctors under his jurisdiction, the number being limited, and on the death of any one of them, his place is filled up from the young doctors. The whole plan, however, seems to be made subservient to political purposes, as new appointments are frequently made in favour of those young men whose opinions are agreeable to the government. Great discontent is, of course, the result. Restrictions to the number of medical men exist also in other parts of Germany, and in Russia. Dr. Simon appears favorable to the introduction of the system of restriction into France; and the cheapness of medical education there, as well as the existence of the order of *officiers de santé*, renders, probably, some such reform needful in that country. We confess we should be sorry to see in England any other check laid on the increase of medical men than the wholesome check of increased requirements as to thorough education. The effect of such a plan as the Bavarian seems to us likely to be that many men, unless of superior moral and intellectual character, would study mechanically up to the time of their appointment, and then sink into contented mediocrity.

The only real cure for the hydra-headed evil of medical jealousy we believe to be in the elevation of view and purity of purpose of the individuals themselves. He who looks most on the Whole and to the Future is least likely to be taken up with the squabbles of the present.

The remaining part of the letter to Mead contains many interesting remarks on England and the English character, which require no comment of ours to commend themselves to the reader; and the author concludes with an elegant compliment to Mead as having mainly contributed to raise the medical profession to its present position.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE BARON RENE DUFRICHE DESGENETTES.

Réné Dufriche Desgenettes was born at Alençon in 1762. His family was one of the most ancient in the city. They had filled the office of magistrate; they had founded institutions, and raised monuments. His mother was a Breton. He considered himself to derive from her the stiffness and obstinacy which, mingled with Norman reserve, formed the basis of his character, and were yet reconcilable with the noblest generosity. He was early placed at school, but at one which had some years previously degenerated in the hands of the Jesuits, and where the studies had assumed a puerile character. In 1778 Desgenettes was sent to Paris. He entered the Maison de Saint Barthe, and pursued the course of study of the College Du Plessis. How strangely contrasted are human destinies! The little society which Fontenelle gathered around him dispersed, to disappear quietly in academies. That which at this period surrounded Desgenettes was already in the invisible grasp of a fate which dealt out to one bitter calamities, to another riches and honour! After the lapse of thirty-four years, one of his fellow-students was found by Desgenettes at Moscow, another perished under the blade of the assassin, another and another, after years of proscription, concealment, and exile, issued, the one from retirement, the other from banishment, to become, the former, minister to Napoleon, the

latter, to Louis the Eighteenth. Dubois de Rochefort and Corvisart studied with Desgenettes. Following their example, he chose the profession of medicine. This science at that time owed its entire support to the talents of certain private teachers, to the lessons of Roux, Bricquet, and Vicq d'Azyr. The schools of the Faculty of Medicine were deserted. The resort was to the Jardin du Roi, to the College of Pharmacy, and the schools of Surgery. Every department of the science was there taught by those who have been our own masters, or by those by whom they were taught. All were able, profound, eloquent; a Louis, a Peyrille, a Lassus, a Pelleton, a Boyer, a A. Dubois, and others; Jussieu, Macquer, Fourcroy, Desault,—Desault, of vigorous and original mind, whose hands seemed to raise surgery from nothing. Desault, in common with Sabatier and Pelleton gave private lessons. The merit of this course was due to Louis the Sixteenth, and that excellent prince contributed to place Desault on the grand stage of the Hôtel Dieu. Desgenettes having, in 1782, become the possessor of a moderate patrimony, put it to the same use as Volney—he travelled. In 1784 he went to London with Labillardière. In 1785 he visited Italy, and travelled over it as it were step by step. He did not return to France till 1789. To follow him in his tour would be to traverse with rapidity a gallery filled with portraits of the most celebrated contemporaries in every department of life,—artists, musicians, engravers, sculptors, poets, writers, lawyers, the learned, and especially eminent travellers, and great physicians. Desgenettes knew them, studied them, was familiar with them; the illustrious Banks (the comrade of Cook) and the Quaker Lettsom* who, having dedicated himself to the cause of

* He is mentioned in Lettsom's letter to Cuming, Letter 37, as sending a complimentary message to the doctor's eldest son, then ten years of age.

public morals, sought for their origin in the principles of hygiene no less than in the principles of reason; John Hunter, too, that uncultivated and surpassing genius, who borrowed nothing from men, but drew all from the force of his own intellect. In Italy, that country most favoured of heaven—in fair and smiling Italy—at Milan, Pavia, Parma, Venice, Ferrara, Bologna, Rome, Naples, Florence, in all these capitals, and in the smaller towns, what an incredible number of eminent men, what treasures of the mind did he meet with! what hospitality, what simplicity of manners, what refined politeness! Both in England and in Italy, Desgenettes came in contact with his own countrymen, some of whom afterwards became his friends; amongst others the able Professor Flandrin and the Commander Dolomieu. Of Flandrin I shall say more in the sequel: Dolomieu was a passionate student of geology, whom Desgenettes met with in other times and other scenes, and in a situation distressing to a man of feeling, but whom at this time he had the pleasure of accompanying to the hypogees of Cornetti. These grottoes are ornamented with paintings of unknown antiquity, representing the transmigration of souls, and the rewards and punishments of a future state, drawn from the ancient Egyptian mythology.

What particularly strikes us in the early details of the life of Desgenettes is, the correctness of his judgment respecting the great masterpieces of painting, and the care which he took to collect on the spot curious particulars respecting celebrated men, both living and dead. These particulars he afterwards inserted in the short biographical notices with which his pen enriched the journals and dictionaries. Another circumstance worth noticing is the strict intimacy which he formed from the first with Mascagni, the author of the greatest treatise we possess on the Lymphatic Nerves. Full of admiration of his

friend, and deeply imbued with his doctrine, Desgenettes quitted Italy, and went, in 1789, to Montpellier. He was at this time a candidate for the doctor's degree, and to obtain it he wrote, in Latin, a thesis as brief and concise as the language allowed, entitled 'Tentamen Physiologicum de Vasis Lymphaticis.' This thesis, which treated of the new discovery of these vessels, was accepted by the Faculty, and Desgenettes received the diploma of Doctor, and as he had succeeded in injecting all the lymphatic system of vessels, he held a public demonstration, which gained the applause of all the professors, even of those of Barthez, a success of which he gave all the credit to his friend Mascagni. During the winter of 1787, at Rome, in the Hospital du Saint Esprit, Desgenettes, being occupied with anatomical researches, met with two lungs, one much diseased, the other scarcely changed, but both containing foreign bodies, heaps of molecules of marble and plaster imbedded in the neighbouring cellular tissue, or arranged lengthwise, of which some, in the form of small cylinders, were evidently incrustated portions of the lymphatic vessels. These vessels, then, had absorbed a minute quantity of this pulverized stone which, during the respiratory process, had penetrated into the lungs. In the second place, Desgenettes had discovered, by experiments on subjects of different ages, that even after death has taken place the action of the lymphatic vessels is kept up and continues, but in different degrees, during more than fifteen hours in adults, and sixty hours in children; the last effort, according to Desgenettes, of that primitive energy, that tonic power, which pervades all the mass of organs, but which is chiefly found in the cellular tissue which enwraps them, and in which the lymphatic vessels have their origin. The vital power, then, according to this view, would not be concentrated in the nerves, or, as has been said, in the heart, but would be diffused through all parts of the system, as

may be proved also by the movements which agitate the flesh of the shark in portions separated from the animal at the distance of two or three days. What, then, is the source of this marvellous power? will it ever be known? * And shall we not be tempted to conclude, as has been recently said, that in an infinity of cases this long tenacity of action in the absorbent vessels renders doubtful some results in pathological anatomy but ill understood and explained. At any rate, what Desgenettes established on this delicate point has been confirmed by Flandrin and Valentin. Their observations and experiments appeared in the 'Journal de Médecine' in 1793. Desgenettes had previously communicated them to the Académie Royale des Sciences at Montpellier. This society enrolled him amongst its correspondents, a title which placed him at Paris on a level with the ordinary correspondents of the Académie des Sciences, and conferred on him the same privileges. There was, at that time, amongst the students a secret society, of which Desgenettes, who was one of its members, only speaks in general terms. He neither explains its organization, its laws, nor its spirit. It is believed to have had as its object the maintenance of a rigid discipline amongst the students. The student who should be guilty of any blameable act received an order to quit the city, and if he refused to obey he had to maintain his ground by the point of the sword. This society was betrayed by one of its members. He denounced it to the rest of the students as dangerous and criminal. The fact is that all societies of this nature become unintentionally and involuntarily mischievous; their principle renders them dangerous; it authorizes

* It is singular here to find attributed to the lymphatic vessels a power which can only exist in the nervous system, and also to observe this first glimpse of the functions of the spinal marrow, since so ably demonstrated by Dr. Marshall Hall.

espionage and unjust censures ; it listens to the informer, and passes sentence without a full understanding of the crime ; at any rate, it gives rise to disputes and animosities, kindles discord and hatred, and finishes by eternally separating those whom it had sought to unite for beneficial purposes. A singular species of jurisprudence, to make duelling the medium of punishment, or of impunity. Law only ought to reign supreme amongst men. Every secret society is at issue with the general fabric of society, and is all the more formidable as it occupies itself indefatigably in procuring the ascendancy of its own ideas of perfection, even at the cost of upsetting everything else ; blind to the fact that its triumphs furnish the precedent by which its own destruction shall be effected.

The distant murmur of political agitation had begun at Montpellier even in 1789. In a little while, in the fury of uncontrolled passion, the city became full of trouble, sedition, anarchy, and murder. Desgenettes left the place to return to Paris, vainly hoping there to enjoy quiet ; but all minds were filled with images of disorder and ruin ; society seemed torn up from its roots, and impelled towards the abyss. Those even who had been suddenly raised by a caprice of fortune manifested, even amidst their rejoicing, a something sinister, which brought to mind the laugh of the candidates in Homer. Desgenettes sought some diversion of mind in labour and in his social duties. He met again Pelletier, Tenon, Sabatier, Vicq d'Azyr, Condorcet, and Dolomieu. Especially he saw Louis, who was then dying of hydrothorax,—the same disease of which Dupuytren died. What sad disclosures he had to make to Desgenettes ! What bitterness in his just complaints ! He, the immortal author of the '*Mémoires de l'Académie*'—he, torn to pieces without mercy by the fury of jealous mediocrity, but visited with respect by sovereigns and philosophers, by Joseph II, by Christian, by Gustavus, and by Franklin—

their equal. This man, charged with pride, had chosen the place of his interment at La Salpêtrière, amidst those poor infirm creatures whom he had ministered unto and comforted. His mind, already prepossessed with the calamities which were coming on France and on Europe, he advised Desgenettes to withdraw from them by attaching himself to the service of the army, advice which was also given him by Vicq d'Azyr, and which Vicq d'Azyr regretted that he himself was unable to follow. Desgenettes, however, published in the '*Journal de Médecine*' some short and important articles:—an Analysis of the Absorbent System; an extract from the Surgical Works of Flajani; an article upon a work which he had edited, that of Girardi of Parma, on the Origin of the Great Sympathetic; an article, with some Paradoxes which he had got from his friend Fontana; Observations which he had delivered at the Société Royale de Médecine of Paris, on Medical Instruction in the Hospitals of Tuscany. The Hospital de la Nouvelle Sainte Marie at Florence was at that time equal to the best clinical institutions of Europe. At last, when on the point of quitting his family, he stole a brief interval to visit Rouen and Navarre, where he had friends. On his return he found France in those cruel hands which were destined to steep it in blood. By the interest of his friend Thouret, he obtained a medical appointment in the army of Italy, and on the 15th of March, 1793, he set out to repair to his post. In the first three campaigns this army conquered Savoy and the country of Nice, reduced to submission Lyons and the Vendean insurrection, retook Toulon, attacked Cagliari, took Oneglia and Savona, and signalised itself in twenty battles, gaining the glorious victory of Loano, which placed Italy at their feet. It was much, but it was too little. It had successively had seven generals, Hoche holding the command but a few hours. Such was

then the instability of party. Neglected by the government, it languished in want and inaction, destitute of clothing, of provisions, of pay; weakened also by fighting, by desertion, and by sickness.

Prepared for the service by study, Desgenettes soon acquired by practice consummate ability. He may be judged by the complex details which he has given in his *Memoirs*, and by the medical observations which he collected at the army, and which the medical journals and the '*Décade Philosophique*' published. At the request of the minister Roland, he showed in a report the necessity of having in France a collection of anatomical wax models, similar to those exhibited in the magnificent cabinet of Florence. Nothing can be more animated than his description in the report of these figures: some reclining and fixed, others upright and moveable; and of those thousands of detached pieces representing every part of the human organization, the bones, the ligaments, the muscles, the viscera, the blood-vessels, the lymphatic vessels, all the nerves, both their principal masses and their most slender filaments. All these parts seem to have issued from the hands of Nature; all is living, so to speak—tone, freshness, colour. But these images, so true to nature, formed to revive in the memory fading impressions, can speak to the mind only through the eyes. They are too fragile to be handled, and would ill prepare the surgeon for real operations. They would form, however, the archives of the history of anatomy. They are a kind of corporeal treatises, much superior to written treatises, and if from the earliest antiquity both had been employed, the progress of discovery would have been much more rapid.

During these three years, and in every place where he was stationed, Desgenettes, by his indefatigable zeal, his disinterestedness, the nobleness of his conduct, and the qualities of his mind, conciliated the esteem of the people

and of the army. He earned a right to the esteem of foreigners by the care which he took of the Piedmontese, Austrian, and English prisoners. In 1794 he was made physician in chief. It was towards this time that he became connected with Napoleon Bonaparte. The preceding year, at Fréjus, he had only seen this young officer, who, in company with his brother Joseph and many others, was returning from the unsuccessful expedition against Sardinia. They were already treated with deference, and there prevailed an opinion that, if Napoleon had had the command, Sardinia would have been taken.

The part which he bore in the retaking of Toulon is well known. He was of those who, after the siege of this city, fell back upon Nice. He was seen to serve either as the chief of the artillery, or as a simple volunteer under General Dumerbion, whom he rendered victorious by his secret counsels, and whom he urged to the invasion of Italy, which was, however, a work reserved for himself. A base jealousy occasioned his arrest. His captivity was short. He was irreproachable, and his talents rendered him necessary. Those who had thrown him into prison liberated him in a few days, and his liberation was a triumph to the city of Nice. It was in this city that Desgenettes and Napoleon, brought together on matters of business, forgot the time in long conversations. Often Napoleon would say to him, "Study all the details of an army; extend your experience; perhaps some day I shall reap the fruits of it." In 1795, when scarcely recovered from a violent typhus, Desgenettes was summoned to Toulon. He had there to regulate the sanitary service for a maritime expedition, whose object was unknown. Inspired by the bold genius of Napoleon, this expedition was stopped by the prompt submission of the power which it threatened; and whilst Napoleon went to Paris, where he carried his plans for military operations, Desgenettes

assumed his functions at the army. Their separation was but short. Placed at the head of the army of the interior, Napoleon wished Desgenettes to become its physician in chief. In the hope of obtaining this appointment, Desgenettes solicited his discharge. He obtained it, and in the commencement of January, 1796, he quitted the army of Italy and set out for the capital. At his arrival he found all changed. The post of which he was desirous was filled. The army of the interior was no more than the 7th military division, and the only post which could be given to Desgenettes was that of an ordinary physician in the military and stationary hospital of Paris. He resigned it, and entered the Val de Grâce, where he filled a professor's chair, publishing, during the course of the next two years, some writings on instruction, and on the art of observing and treating the maladies of military men, contributing to the creation of two medical societies, cultivating the acquaintance of men of learning, authors, and artists, and becoming the ally of his friend Thouret, the excellent director of the École de Santé. In the meantime Napoleon had taken his flight towards Italy. It is said, that before his departure for Italy he had turned his thoughts towards the East. He was not yet twenty years of age, but at that age, which was the age of Leibnitz and of Alexander, like them he was made to move the world. Whatever were his first designs, he matured them amidst the tumult of the rapid campaign, and during the negotiations of Campo Formio he was seen to study on maps the form of places, and to measure distances with the compasses.

France had lost her colonies. The possession of Egypt was no longer a question of ascendancy, but of necessity; it was in this light that Napoleon presented it in his correspondence with the government. The expedition was resolved on. One of the most characteristic traits in the

history of Napoleon is the constancy of his attachments. On returning to Paris he obtained the appointment of Desgenettes as physician in chief. He called him to him, and kindly reproached him for not following him to the army of Italy. "You were refused what I had asked," said he; "why did you not come to me at Milan? you would have found that I was master in my army." This time there were no more refusals; the affair progressed, the mask was dropped, and they set out. Desgenettes and Larrey went together to Marseilles and Toulon; Napoleon had preceded them. The fleet was immense; it put to sea, reinforced in the voyage by vessels from Corsica, Genoa, Civita Vecchia, &c., and carrying 30,000 men, composed, like the army of Alexander, of soldiers, generals, *savans*, and artists; of bravery, knowledge, and talents the most illustrious: Berthollet, Monge, Fourier, Malus, C. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Conté, Chaussy, E. Savigny, Antoine Dubois, Denon, Parceval, Jomard, Renoult, and many others. They arrived in sight of Malta, and in ten days the formidable Malta was taken. On leaving Malta the fleet hastened to Egypt. Napoleon, victorious, protested his respect for the national religion and for the legitimate authorities; that he only wished to rescue Egypt from the rapacity of its oppressors, to protect the weak against the strong, and to establish the reign of justice. Besides the Commission of the Arts dispersed throughout Egypt, exploring the soil, the river, the canals, the natural productions, and collecting the materials of that magnificent monument which they have erected to the honour of antiquity, Napoleon created an institute at once scientific, political, and literary. He united to it Desgenettes and Antoine Dubois. He endowed it with a collection of books, a chemical laboratory, an observatory, and in the first sitting of this body he proposed a series of questions, in which it is plain that nothing that could tend

to regenerate Egypt had escaped his vigilance. The only prince who resisted the ascendancy of Napoleon was Djezzar, the Pacha of Acre. The expedition against Syria was determined upon. The particulars and the result are known. Notwithstanding so many brilliant deeds of arms, such prodigies of valour, of which the remembrance even now survives in those lands, the result was unsuccessful. All was lost but honour. The honour of medicine received there also a glorious accession. Medical heroism rivalled military heroism. Courage gives birth to courage, and whilst Larrey (I use the words of Berthier), whilst Larrey flew with his assistants to the very foot of the breach, and, under the hottest fire of the enemy, carried succour to the wounded, Desgenettes, with that cool courage which is inspired by a sense of duty, traversed the quarters of the hospital reserved for the plague. He was aware of the danger; he braved it, he dissembled it. He effected a change in the mind by false expedients; the serenity of his countenance and of his words sank into the hearts of the sick, and more completely to restore confidence, he took a lancet, steeped it in the pus of a bubo, and inflicted a horrible puncture on his arm. In the neighbourhood of the axilla two slight inflammations succeeded. This fact is recorded by Desgenettes himself in his '*Histoire Médicale de l'Armée d'Orient*,' and it is explicitly mentioned in Berthier's accounts. What can be more authentic? And yet what is more doubtful? for Desgenettes is said to have publicly denied it. Perhaps he was afraid of having imitators, and of perilling life by an experiment in which his own had been spared. Whether it was a feint or a reality, the effect which he sought was produced. The composure of mind which succeeded lightened the disease, and multiplied the number of cures. Such were the first acts of this great drama, in which Desgenettes and Larrey played

a part so noble, and contended for the prize of boldness with the first men in France and in the world. This drama, however, came rapidly to a close.

The destruction of the fleet and the retreat from Syria hastened the sad termination. Napoleon's fortune had lost its lustre. Less successful than Alexander at Tyre ; he found an obstacle, and the East escaped his hands. Imprisoned in his own conquests, in the midst of a sea of enemies, who were about to raise against him new storms, he had not the means of touching his native earth, and thus, like a new Antæus, deriving from it fresh strength. He ensured a temporary safety to his army by the victory of Aboukir, committed Egypt to Kleber, and set out for France. He was followed by Dessaix, who rejoined him at Marengo, and expired at his feet whilst giving him the victory. Left to himself, Kleber, notwithstanding the superiority of his mind, was amazed and desponding. He thought himself forsaken ; he negotiated, and applied himself meanwhile to the defence of Egypt ; he recommended to those in power the maintenance of justice and the laws, to the people confidence and submission ; he infused new life into the literary, scientific, and executive departments ; he reformed especially the sanitary service, making use in all of the talents of Desgenettes, Larrey, and Boudet. But after a time Kleber was stricken by the dagger of a young fanatic ; he died, and Egypt was lost. And here I shall abandon what Montaigne calls the pomp of war, to direct attention to the humble labours of medicine. It might be thought to have sufficed to the glory of Desgenettes to have honorably figured in these scenes, but it is due to his memory to give some details of his generous conduct, of his researches, inquiries, his writings, and his character.

Deeply versed in all which related to military maladies, and impressed by the work of Prosper Alpin, Desgenettes

did not tarnish in Egypt the fame he acquired in Italy. From his first entrance into this new country, after having reported to his colleagues the different places which our armies were to occupy, his first care was to invite them to the study of those places, of the men, the animals, the occupations, the food, the habits, the temperature, and the diseases, so as to prepare, by a course of medical topography, an exact description of the whole of Egypt. Hence resulted those curious topographical researches, the notes and recollections which he published in his work under the names of their authors ; for, far from keeping in the shade the merit of the bold and learned medical officers of the army of Egypt, he loved to do honour to their talents, and to proclaim their services. More than once he obtained for them those rewards which he had deserved for himself, and which came to him, as to Larrey, unsolicited. These memoirs, however, and topographical sketches are but few and brief. But in such a rapid succession of marches and removals, and amidst so many fatigues and perils—for from time to time death carried away one or other of these generous servants of men—where was to be found that retirement, that composure of mind which was necessary to arrange the ideas and commit them to writing? In their labours, however, may be traced that sad phalanx of woes with which modern Egypt is afflicted, and which to ancient Egypt were unknown ; that variola, the contemporary and sister of the plague, and that ophthalmia, whose ravages are the first objects which strike the traveller, and of which it may be said, that it has nothing in common with the ophthalmia mentioned by Herodotus, but which is not noticed either by Moses, by the Greeks of Alexander, or by the Romans ; which in the course of years, and by means of influences still unknown, has assumed a character so malignant and so extensively propagated, that it covers at the present

day all Egypt, and after having in France, six centuries ago, followed the steps of St. Louis, ravaging several of the European islands, and a great part of the continent, and even penetrating into England, Italy, and Sweden. In comparison of this, what were the infectious ophthalmias of Aphrodiseus and Lanzoni? Finally, that pest of the East, not less destructive than deluges, conflagrations, and conquests, the plague,—a disease which dates no further back than thirteen centuries, and which seemed at its first appearance in the world to have opened that era of misery, slavery, and darkness into which Egypt was to fall,—for there seems to be no medium in that country, either man shines in all the brilliancy of genius, or sinks into the depths of brutishness. This cruel malady was encountered at every step by the French army in Egypt. Plague was everywhere; it surrounded, preceded, harassed the soldier, mixing its snares with the snares of the Arab. For forty years it had not visited Syria. It was carried there by the fugitive Mamelukes, and of all the scourges which armed themselves against us, this was the most murderous. Desgenettes came to the conclusion that the plague is as it were the heritage of the soil of Lower Egypt, that it is there endemic; and from the fact that the plague shows itself at a hundred different points which have no communication between them, and in places where it has never been known to arise spontaneously, Desgenettes drew this conclusion, that the plague is transmitted, and that it is contagious. He was too sincere to refuse his assent to a truth so thoroughly established, and too much an enemy to vain-glory to innovate on this dogma, or to obscure it by arguments and paradoxes. His conviction on this point accorded with the general opinion. One of the first precautions which Bonaparte took in Egypt was to create lazarettos, and to impose a quarantine. They even went so far as to

destroy by fire both the effects of those who died by plague, and the barracks of the *corps d'armée*, in which the least trace of plague had appeared. Was it right, or was it a prejudice? Who shall dare to accuse Napoleon and Desgenettes of prejudice? We can only admire the more the courage of both these men which led them—Napoleon, to visit the hospital of Jaffa, to tend the sick, to raise and support in their beds patients dying of the plague; and Desgenettes, in the absence of other aid, to descend, or *rather to elevate himself*, to the humblest offices, even to convey to a subterranean pit a heap of infected and putrid articles, from which it was important to free the vicinity of the camp. This fatiguing labour had to be performed kneeling, and so offensive was the effluvia, that Desgenettes had from time to time to withdraw a short distance into a stream of pure air to recover his breath and his senses, which were ready to fail him. Shall I add another fact? Berthollet had first laid before him his theory of the manner in which the pestilential miasma enters the system; which, in his view, is by the saliva as its primary vehicle. That very day a sufferer dying of the plague entreated Desgenettes to partake with him of the remains of a potion which had been given him. Without emotion or hesitation, Desgenettes took the glass from the sick man, filled it and emptied it; an action which inspired the sufferer with a gleam of hope, but made the attendants draw back with horror. This was a second inoculation, more dangerous than the first, of which Desgenettes himself seemed to think but little.

I wander, perhaps, in these details, but woe to him who shall be offended with them, and woe to me, I may say, with the peasant of the historian Josephus, if, meeting with instances so touching of a fearless humanity, I pass them over in silence, for to honour virtue is to honour Him who creates the sentiment in our hearts, and exhibits

it as more worthy of our admiration than all the triumphs of intellect. In his work, Desgenettes has done full justice to those sanitary officers who fell victims to the plague, in all classes : servants, nurses, pupils, pharmacians, surgeons, physicians, to Maselet, to Saint Ours, and Auriol, and Céresole, and Bruant, and Devevre, and many others. Maselet, whose knowledge and devotion Napoleon himself honoured ; Saint Ours, on whom the wounded called long after his death ; and Bruant and Devevre, both young, both competitors, or rather, I should say, brothers in science and common zeal, as they were in misfortune, who, leaning on each other, dragged themselves along amongst their sick, of whom they were the idols, and who, struck by the same blow, breathed out their last sighs almost at the same instant. “Excellent young men!” exclaims Desgenettes, “if the celebrity of the events with which my work is connected should avail to save it from oblivion, posterity will bless me for having transmitted to it your two names, which will never be uttered but with respect and emotion.” In an army where all did their duty Desgenettes did his, losing no opportunity of giving the most salutary counsels as to the health of the soldier. Those methods which he proposed for the treatment of smallpox were printed more than once in Arabic, for the benefit of the indigent, and such was his incredible activity, such the spirit which he infused into his colleagues, that at the most disastrous epochs the hospitals of the army were as well regulated as the best establishments in our great cities. All the medical officers as they were “sans peur” were also “sans reproche,” and if the science suffered any deficiencies, it was death which occasioned them. There is a singular remark of Desgenettes that, notwithstanding the scourges with which Egypt is afflicted, and the mortality which cuts off so many infants, as is shown by the tables drawn up by himself, yet the climate is so salubrious,

especially in the higher districts, that the army reckoned fewer invalids than were reckoned in the same space of time by the French army in Europe; from whence it appears that in Europe cold, damp, and abrupt vicissitudes of temperature constitute a sort of plague more destructive than the plague itself; this was seen at Moscow. I may add, that in Egypt a great part of the diseases are the work of man, whilst elsewhere they are the work of Nature, and hence one sees what Egypt might become in skilful hands directed by the science and art of Europe. Half a century would suffice to restore to it the splendours of that time when the Nile bore on its bosom cedar palaces adorned with gold, and when, from Thebes to Memphis, an extent of a hundred miles, towered on either bank of the river a series of palaces and temples ornamented with colossal statues and mingled with pyramids, whilst to the right and to the left lay fertile fields in the highest state of cultivation. The example spreading further and further, in a century perhaps Africa, like Europe, would be intersected by railroads. Oh! that man had known only to create, not to destroy, what would now be the surface of the earth? All would be greatness, abundance, salubrity, and masterpieces of genius, wisdom in the laws, and goodness in the heart. But these fair hopes of peace and civilization were to be abandoned, and Egypt left destitute of those wise counsels which produced victory. After having regulated, like a victor, the destiny and welfare of the sick, Desgenettes, casting a last look on that land which was to him as a second country, set out for France, and arrived at the port of Marseilles in 1802, at the time that Napoleon was concluding with England that peace which was of so short a duration. War was soon rekindled, and, like a vast conflagration, set on fire all Europe, carrying Desgenettes from army to army, to Moscow, and across the Continent, as if, having bathed in the suns of Egypt,

he was now to bathe in the snows of Russia. In every situation Desgenettes was worthy of himself. When taken prisoner by the Russians, his name pronounced before Alexander procured him his liberty. "Know," wrote Alexander to him, "that you have claims not merely, as you urge, to kind treatment, but to the gratitude of every nation." Being shut up in Torgau by the disasters of Leipsic, Desgenettes passed there the winter in the horrors of typhus and the endurance of the most cruel privations. He only returned to France in May 1814. He had witnessed the catastrophe of Egypt, but he did not witness the catastrophe of the Empire. He saw not with his eyes that tremendous fall which yet holds so large a place amongst human ruins, as if to teach nations as well as kings, that war is the most deplorable of employments, and that the age for great military enterprises is apparently passed, at least in Europe, since with so many brave armies, and with such a superiority of genius, Napoleon himself was overcome. The eyes of mankind are now open to the cruel vanity of conquests, and future generations will aspire to a glory less barren and less fatal to the human species. To return to Desgenettes. Early appointed by the Directory, as a joint professor, to the chair of *Physique Médicale et Hygiène*, Desgenettes was appointed, in 1802, Physician in Chief to the Military Hospital of Paris, and, some months afterwards, Inspector-General of the Sanitary Service of the Armies. He obtained, subsequently, the post to which he had long aspired, that of Physician in Chief to the *Hôtel Royal des Invalides*. The passions or interests of politics took from him, and again restored to him some of his appointments. Whatever they were he consecrated his leisure to literary composition. In the number, the variety, and especially the brevity of his small treatises, Desgenettes seemed to say, like La Fontaine, "Long works appal me." Even

his Medical History of the Army of the East is not an exception, any more than the collection of Eloges which he published on the academicians of Montpellier, or even his Memoirs, apparently longer works, but only comprising in fact, pieces, reports, detached fragments, and with little of order or unity. Desgenettes was gifted in the highest degree with that faculty of imitation which Aristotle makes one of the attributes of our species. He does not narrate, he paints; and as he saw that he amused by his pictures, perhaps he allowed himself to infuse a spice of that malignity which is natural to all men, and which rendered him sometimes sarcastic and satirical, especially where he had received some offence. But he had too much justice not to retract when he was undeceived, and too much generosity not to repair his fault. His courage has been recorded. One proof of it has been cited over which I would draw a veil, to refrain from profaning our glory or violating truth. The most simple fact may easily be blackened by commentaries. It is but too easy to distort an innocent action, and to invest in frightful colours that masculine pity, which, a virtue in a military chief, would have been in every other a criminal barbarity. The fact to which I allude* was reduced by Desgenettes to its simplicity, when he wrote the word, "The consul remembered it no more, the emperor had forgotten it."

But what ought especially to raise the character of Desgenettes in our estimation, is the heartfelt pity he manifested for misfortune, and his enthusiastic sympathy with noble actions. In the retreat from Syria, some unfortunate persons hurrying after the army, climbed Mount Carmel, and in the feeble starlight bewildered themselves in impracticable paths, and fell from rock to rock into the abyss beneath. Desgenettes, in his description, seems to

* Evidently the alleged poisoning of the sick at Jaffa.—TRANS.

fall with them, and to mingle his groans with theirs. How does he expatiate on the conduct of that generous woman who, in the retreat, braving the fatigues of a most difficult march, gave her horse to some foot soldiers to pass a torrent; gave her stock of water and provisions to the sick and wounded, and who, hearing in the desert the despairing cries of a blind soldier, abandoned by his comrades, flew to him. "Come," said she, in a voice broken with emotion, "and cling to the crupper of my horse, he is as gentle as I am, he will not hurt you; come, poor creature, I will take care of you!" The blind man, unable to see his benefactress, exclaimed, "Is it an angel who guides and feeds me!" "No," replied she, with a simplicity which her graces enhanced; "no, it is not an angel, it is a woman, an Italian, Madame Verdier, the wife of the general." I have used the words of my author, who possessed a sensibility which was perhaps to him, as it is to us, the source of many contradictions, of tenderness and anger, of patience and passion, of courteousness and rudeness, of reserve and pride.

Desgenettes was an officer of the Legion of Honour in 1804, at the origin of that institution, and was made commander in 1814, after his return to France, and under the first restoration. He received at the same time from the King of Sweden the decoration of the Order de l'Etoile Polaire. In 1809 he had been made a baron, with Larrey, Percy, and Heurteloup. In 1792 he belonged to the Medical Society of London, to the Academies of Rouen, Bologna, Florence, Sienna, Cortona, and to the Société Royale des Sciences of Montpellier. He was in 1820 one of the first members of the Académie Royale de Médecine. He had had the honour of presiding at the Institute of Cairo; he had, in 1832, the honour of becoming a Fellow of the Académie des Sciences. In 1830 he resumed at the Faculty the chair of Hygiène, which he

had occupied so long. "It was there," says M. Moreau, "it was in that chair, that in the month of April, 1834, he received, in the midst of a lesson, the first seizure of the disease which was to be fatal." Art arrested for a time the effects of the apoplexy which had struck him, but the infirmities which followed were soon aggravated by domestic sorrows. He had the possession of his faculties but not of his movements. His walk was staggering and his articulation indistinct, and the increasing decay which he manifested indicated that the fatal hour was approaching. At last, on the 2d of February, 1837, at the age of seventy-five, he expired, consoled, like Scarpa, in his last moments, by the hopes of religion, and, like Scarpa, resigning himself to the mercy of the God whom his fathers had worshipped.*

* Extracted from the Eloge of Baron Desgenettes, by E. Pariset, read at the Session of the Académie Royale de Médecine, Sept. 4, 1838, and published in 'l'Histoire des Membres de l'Académie,' &c.

LETTER TO RÉNÉ DUFRICHE DESGENETTES.

“ There are occurrences and situations in which death is to be preferred to life, and even the physician may be entreated to shorten the term of existence ; but his exclusive province is the maintenance and prolongation of life to its utmost extent, no matter under what circumstances it may be. His thoughts and endeavours must be solely directed to the spinning out of the thread of mortality ; to snap it forcibly would, in his case, be worse than presumption—it would be a crime. He must not only do that which his own knowledge and conscience enjoin, and the confiding trust of others reposed in him demands, but also what is expected from him, as consistent with his profession and his position in society.

“ As between mother and child, so between the physician and his patient, a sort of relationship is formed ; however indifferent the one may have previously been to the other, as soon as the physician assumes the care of the patient he becomes to him an object of anxiety and sympathy, a part of his very heart, for he strives, not merely to defend him against the assaults of disease, but against the many unreasonable demands of the world without. This purely humane relation appears so natural, that it is scarcely reckoned as service, and attracts no notice except under extraordinary circumstances.

“ Whether you, as a pattern of a conscientious and courageous physician, dared to oppose the mighty request, nay, command of a high authority, you may now, in a world where at length all human considerations have ceased, and nothing can be attributed to over-scrupulous modesty, acknowledge without disguise.

“ In the position which you held in the army of Napoleon in Egypt, it is easily to be conceived that you

would often be mentioned in connexion with the history of those infected with the plague at Jaffa.* The silence of otherwise well-informed narrators, respecting your conduct at that time, admits of different interpretations.

"The General in Chief, as he is called in this semi-mythical narrative, had determined to hasten the inevitable death of the incurable plague patients, by means of a stupefying draught.

"Who it was that lent himself to this is not mentioned, but that you declared yourself against it is more than probable. The courage for which you were so celebrated† did not merely relate to your bold fearless intercourse with the infected, for he who looks narrowly at the expressions of Pariset, will discern that it was exercised towards a despotic commander.‡

* "Cette ville (remarks Bourrienne, in his *Memoirs of Napoleon*, tom. ii, Paris, 1829, p. 254) témoin naguère d'une horrible nécessité, va voir encore cette nécessité commander la mort."

† Pariset (*Eloge de Desgenettes*, 'Mémoires de l'Acad. de Médecine, tom. vii, p. 137) expressed: "Vous avez vu quel était son courage. On en a cité une preuve sur laquelle je dois jeter un voile, pour ne pas profaner notre gloire, pour ne pas outrager la vérité."

‡ Bourrienne says of this affair: "Une triste et longue délibération avait eu lieu sur le sort qui attendait les pestiférés incurables, et aux limites de la vie. Après les discussions les plus consciencieuses, on se décida à avancer de quelques instans, par une potion, une mort inévitable quelques moments plus tard, mais plus douloureuse et plus cruelle." (*Mémoires*, p. 257, 262.)

Napoleon himself remarks thereupon, at St. Helena (the same, p. 264), "Je ne pense pas que c'eût été commettre un crime, que de donner de l'opium aux pestiférés. Au contraire, c'eût été obéir à la voix de la raison. Quel est l'homme qui n'aurait pas préféré une mort prompte, à l'horreur de vivre exposé aux tortures les plus affreuses, de la part de ces barbares. Si mon fils, et cependant je crois l'aimer autant qu'on peut aimer son enfant, était dans une situation pareille à celle de ces malheureux, mon avis serait qu'on en agît de même; et si je m'y trouvais moi-même, j'exigerais qu'on en agît ainsi envers moi."

"How much an hospital physician has it in his power to do for the encouragement of hopeless sufferers, under the saddest circumstances, may be learned from you. The forgetfulness of self, which you manifested with a calmness even surpassing its kindness, but with perhaps an excess of rashness,* was all the more admirable, since you were yourself convinced of the infectious nature of the pestilence, yet you endeavoured, by endangering your own life, to impress the sick with a different conviction.

"You remitted no care and attention which could possibly alleviate the loneliness of those who were torn by disease from their hopes and aims, and agonized with pain and fear. Your concern for suffering, your almost impassioned labours for its relief, seemed, in a certain measure, to banish the sense of its evil.

"Your efforts, not only to console the sick in their sufferings, but also, by your own example, to diminish their excessive fear, deserve to be more extensively imitated, in respect to the methods of making patients forget as much as possible, that, on account of their suffering condition, they are in an hospital.

"This problem you formerly thought was more easily proposed than solved, yet the way to this object is already

* Pariset, p. 130. "Desgenettes, mû par ce froid courage que donne le sentiment du devoir, parcourt avec calme des quartiers et des hôpitaux qu'a peuplés la peste. Il connaît tout le danger, il le brave ; il le déguise ; il donne le change aux esprits par de faux noms ; la sérénité de ses traits et de ses paroles passe dans le cœur des malades ; et pour achever de raffermir les imaginations ébranlées, il prend une lancette, la trempe dans le pus d'un bubon, et s'en fait une double piqûre."

Ibid. p. 133. "Un pestiféré que traitait Desgenettes, et qui allait mourir, le conjura de partager avec lui un reste de la potion qui lui avait été prescrite. Sans s'emouvoir et sans hesiter, Desgenettes prend le verre du malade, le remplit et le vide : action qui donna une lueur d'espoir au pestiféré, mais qui fit pâlir et reculer d'horreur tous ses assistants."

suggested by this, that we watch with circumspection over the appointed attendants, care, cleanliness, and due ventilation of our hospitals. If, however, amongst patients dying of the same disease those live longer who remain in their own confined dwellings, and amidst surrounding circumstances mostly unfavorable, than those who allow themselves to be taken into our most judiciously-managed hospitals: the question is, how to account for this fact, and how to meet it?

“It appears as if man cannot bear to be merely an object of medical treatment, and deprived of all neighbours and ordinary companions, to be under the governance of medical officials. Since most persons, from their youth, have only learned to follow a rule half way, so it becomes hard to them, in sickness, to be completely subjected to one. Neither can they be reconciled to the ultimate importance of the treatment.

“The trifling freedom which, outside the walls of these establishments, a patient enjoys, of wearing what he likes, of receiving or refusing visits, of gratifying occasional fancies in eating and drinking, keeps up, indescribably, an interest in life, and supplies, through variety, and even through the necessity of mutual assistance, a stimulus which is, on the whole, beneficial. Strict regulations and control are very necessary in the treatment of particular diseases, as, for instance, in the ague or the tape-worm; but in incurable sicknesses a certain degree of liberty is to be preferred. Here it depends not so much on the individualizing of the disease as on the peculiarities of the individual case, and that which promotes a pleasant distraction of mind, cheerfulness, and hope, is often the most efficacious prescription.

“The progress of knowledge which strives to satisfy all the demands of humanity, will, in this respect, as in others, find out the right measure of action or omission.

“ At all events, existing arrangements will bear a comparison with the vaunted condition of nature. Let him who doubts of this cast his eyes on the other extreme. If, for example, amongst the Caffres, a man becomes ill, and his recovery is despaired of, a hole is dug in the earth, far from all dwellings, and the sufferer, with a few necessaries of life laid therein. Here he remains till he dies, or till the hyænas devour him.*

“ You remember that, as the mother speaks and acts for her nursling, so does the physician for his patient. He will only, however, be able, perfectly, to sustain this character so far as he is supported by inward independence, a just self-esteem, and a noble courage. The true servant of nature must not sink down into the servant of the public; nor should the friend and guardian of the sick degrade himself to a hireling. Many a one, indeed, thinks that the physician's fee discharges all obligations, in the same manner as he thinks he has sufficiently honored the author of a valuable book when he has paid a few pence for the loan of it to a circulating library.

“ One of the most celebrated sages of the Stoic school rightly compares the physician to the teacher, whose benefits nothing but friendship and cordial good-will can repay.†

* Moodie, *Ten Years in South Africa*. London, 1835, vol. ii, p. 270.

† Seneca de Beneficiis, L. vi, c. 15, 16. “ Ne medico quidquam debere te, nisi mercedulam, dices.—Respondetur, quaedam plurius esse, quam emuntur. Emis a medico rem inestimabilem, vitam ac valetudinem bonam.—Quid ergo, quare et medico et praeceptori plus quiddam debeo, nec adversus illos mercede defungor? Quia ex medico ac praeceptore in amicum transeunt, et nos non arte quam vendunt, obligant, sed benigna et familiari voluntate.—Ille magis pependit, quam medico necesse est: pro me, non pro fama artis, extimuit: non fuit contentus remedia monstrare, sed admovit. Inter sollicitos adsedit, ad suspecta temporare occurrit: nullum ministerium

“ It is a just subject of lamentation in the profession, when right feeling and even better judgment must be sacrificed to a mere anxiety for subsistence. By this means the point of view becomes distorted, unessential considerations make themselves of importance, and in decisive moments it is the slave, not the freeman, who acts.

“ Upon the whole, a medical man finds it easy to practise a peremptory manner since he rarely needs to apologize, not even when he gives pain. The irritable patient, who has worn out his attendants with anxiety or exertion, expects from him an authoritative decision, a deliberate opinion and decree. Even a prescription, which is issued like an order of council, *a sic volo sic jubeo*, excites no anger. Decision is better than timid practice,—a journey, or an operation, often depends upon it.

“ At times it devolves on him, in the decision of the question whether a spreading disease is infectious or not, to give an opinion hateful to him whose personal freedom or whose interest is thereby prejudiced.

“ In over-crowded hospitals, in the confined cottages of the poor, where infection threatens as much in the stillness of death as in the storm of battle, he must render his aid, collectedly and deliberately, deciding at once on the right method. In the higher circles, also, it often becomes his duty to assign delicate and convincing reasons for the treatment he has adopted.*

oneri illi, nullum fastidio fuit. Gemitus meos non securos audivit: in turba multorum invocantium ego illi potissima curatio fui: tantum aliis vacavit, quantum mea valetudo permiserat. Huic ego non tamquam medico, sed tamquam amico, obligatus sum.”

* The following anecdote is related of the well-known surgeon Theden, who was the youngest amongst twenty-three brothers and sisters, and was born when his father was sixty-nine years of age. He was first a tailor and then a barber. The anecdote does not tell

“ If it is the office of the physician to attain those peculiar characteristics of the heart and mind, which give him an empire over the minds of others, he has, on the other hand, to beware of extending this influence for other than strictly medical purposes. He is always in a false position, if, indeed, he escapes the fate of the unfortunate Struensee, who was precipitated from the rank of prime minister to the scaffold. After accumulated honours had been heaped on this gifted and enterprising man, after nobility and the title of count had been conferred upon him, the following sentence was pronounced on the object of general envy, then in his thirty-fifth year : ‘ His right hand and his head to be struck off, his body to be quartered and exposed on the wheel, his head and hand to be stuck on a pole.’ *

“ That the physician who awakens confidence should also be taken into confidence, appears, in ordinary life,

to his disadvantage. (Elwert, *An Account of the Lives of German Surgeons*, v. i, Hildesheim, 1799, p. 592). “ He happened to be at Bautzen with General Von Geist, whose arm had been shattered to the shoulder-blade by a grape shot. Frederick II asked him, ‘ Do you use *nymphæa*?’ (Syrup of *Nymphæa* recommended by La Mettrie) ‘ No.’ ‘ Why not?’ ‘ It has no active properties.’ ‘ Are you acquainted with it?’ ‘ O yes; but in preparation it loses all its subtle, active particles, and becomes no better than barley-sugar.’ ‘ Do you give *quinquina*?’ ‘ Yes.’ ‘ Do you know how to use it?’ ‘ If I did not know that, I should be unfit to be your majesty’s army surgeon.’ ”

* Charles, Prince of Hesse Cassel, in his *Authentic Explanation of the History of the Counts Struensee and Brandt*, 1788, says on this : “ The 25th of April, 1772, was a terrible day to the Counts Struensee and Brandt, when the bloodthirsty rancour of their enemies dishonoured and falsified the voice of justice, and they were degraded into the lowest class of atrocious criminals, their honour, bodies, and property forfeited, and disgrace, terror, and abhorrence cast upon their last moments.”

natural ; but if it happens amongst princes it is, for the most part, viewed in an odious light. To please every one is impossible, even the purest aims are sometimes imputed to unworthy motives.

“The physician who, with all his soul, devotes his whole strength to his profession is not secure from heartless animadversions. How changeable is the mind of man, how uncertain the favour of the great, is well known to you from experience, and it is a question whether you still retain your former warm sympathy in the joys and sorrows of this world.”

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO R. D. DESGENETTES.

Amidst the multiplicity of interesting topics suggested by the Letter to Desgenettes, our attention is at once arrested by the striking example of medical heroism and self-devotion exhibited by him during the plague at Jaffa. It is indeed on such occasions, when pestilence walks abroad in all its direful horrors, “when one citizen flees from another, a neighbour from his neighbour, a relation from his relations, when terror extinguishes each kindlier feeling, and the brother forsakes the brother, the sister the sister, the wife her husband, and at last even the parent his own offspring, leaving them, unpitied and unsoothed, to their fate,”* it is then, indeed, that the courage and benevolence of the medical man are put to a severe test. He is fully aware of the danger he runs in attending on the sick,—a danger in his case increased by the fatigue and anxiety to which he is subjected. What then is he to do? Abandon the post of duty, like Galen when he fled from Rome ; or

* Hecker's Epidemics of the Middle Ages.

Sydenham, when he forsook London during the prevalence of plague? These are rare instances in medical history, and even the talents of those great men do not serve to reconcile us to their conduct,—conduct which must have inflicted a twofold injury, that of depriving the sick of their assistance, and of deepening and widening by their example the panic which usually prevails in such cases. “Epidemics,” says Simon, “are the battle-fields of medical men. Whilst terror suspends or relaxes at least the greater part of social relations, they, silencing those reasonable fears which their own private danger may inspire, must study, unmoved as science itself, all the characters of the disease, and the various forms which it may assume, and strive to fix at once its prophylactics and the most rational treatment to be followed.” It is their duty calmly to pursue their career of knowledge and benevolence, to mitigate the horrors which they cannot avert, and to administer relief and consolation wherever possible, even at the risk of their own lives. “Nothing but the disease itself,” says Simon, “can, in the midst of the disasters of an epidemic, exonerate the medical man from the imperious obligation which compels him to sacrifice himself entirely to the salvation of his fellow-citizens.” An interesting example of this self-devotion was given by Gentili da Fuligno, a celebrated physician of the fourteenth century. In the year 1340 the Black Death devastated Italy, and when it broke out with fury at Genoa, Gentili went, as it is thought, expressly to the assistance of its inhabitants. He wrote his ‘*Consilium de Peste*’ for the general instruction, devoted himself unceasingly to the relief of the sick, and at last being attacked by the disorder, sunk under its effects. His pupil Francesco de Fuligno attended him to the last, and, determined to preserve to posterity the memory of his master’s self-sacrifice, wrote on a MS. copy of

the above-mentioned work, preserved in the Malatesta Library at Cesena, the following affecting inscription :

Et postea Gentilis infirmatus est ex summa requisitione infirmorum, et hoc fuit 12 die Junii et vixit sex diebus, et mortuus est cujus anima requiescat in pace. Hoc fuit MCCCXLVIII. Et ego Franciscus de Fuligno interfui ægritudini ejus et nunquam dimissi eum usque ad mortem, et sepultus fuit Foligini in loco Eremitarum.

Nor have medical men in modern times been unfaithful to their post. In the still-remembered days of the visitation of Asiatic cholera in Europe and in England, where were the medical men who refused to attend patients, even though they went with little hope of being able to arrest a disease which seemed to mock the power of art? still they went and did what they could at the risk of their own lives. And we have had but lately an instance of medical heroism quite worthy of being placed by the side of the conduct of Desgenettes in the hospital of Jaffa, if not superior to it. We allude to the late Sidney Barnard, who, when the Eclair government steamer, having on board a deadly contagious fever, was prohibited by the authorities from putting into Madeira, nobly volunteered to fill the place left vacant by the death of two medical men, victims to the disorder; went and sank beneath the fell disease. Nor is this instance single. "Most men," says Marx in his Aphorisms, "even soldiers, risk their lives but once; the physician often." Wherever disease threatens, and in whatever form—on the pestilential banks of the Niger, in the stifling siroccos of the desert, the frozen stillness of the arctic zone, the plains of Scinde, or the miasmatic jungles of Bengal—there is found the medical man, intent only upon his duty, braving the danger, and watching with careful eye the progress of disease. It may be said that he seeks for honour and worldly rewards, and so in part he does; but the risks he encounters, and the sacrifices he makes, are often such as

are but inadequately compensated, for what he gains is but limited to maintenance in his sphere of labour, that is, as Carlyle says, the ability to keep on working and suffering. If he sinks amidst those he seeks to save, no national tomb awaits him, no fame attends his name, no wealth or honour is conferred on his family; in the opinion of the world, he has only done his duty; and if he escapes, no extraordinary reward is his; his devotion is little noticed, and soon forgotten. And hence we may deduce the great importance of religion to the medical man, the having the soul fortified with the firm persuasion that in what we are doing we are acting for God, who has laid on us this especial duty, and that whatever happens, we are safe in his hands. "Astruc," says Simon, "did not fear to assert that none but a Christian physician is capable of calmly braving death on the battle-field of contagious disease." Natural courage and a sense of honour do, indeed, carry men very far, enabling them, on the spur of excitement to confront every danger, but coolly to risk life unsupported by an assurance of a happy immortality is a fearful venture. We cannot do better than draw attention here to the solemn caution of the excellent Frank.

"Before taking charge of the sick, medical men ought to examine themselves whether they are capable of fulfilling what such an undertaking demands. They ought to consider the continual danger to which their lives may be exposed. If after this examination they see it to be 'gain' whether to live or to die, if they find a charm in the sublime idea that they are about to be devoted to God, to charity towards their neighbour, and to their own vocation, let them go and act." This passage occurs in a work on practical medicine, when treating of the duties of medical men in pestilential diseases.

Several questions relative to medical duty arise out of the part Desgenettes is described as taking in the trans-

actions of Jaffa; and, first, from the proposal that is supposed to have been made to him by Napoleon, we are led to inquire whether *under any circumstances* a medical man can be justified in using his science to shorten life. Cases do sometimes occur when a patient, worn out with mental and bodily suffering, and a burden to all around him, desires death, and will even entreat the medical attendant to hasten its approach. Such was the case with Mirabeau, who earnestly besought his physician to give him opium, and bitterly complained of his refusal. A conscientious Christian physician will have no hesitation on the subject, but will fully adopt the maxim excellently laid down by Simon—"Man is not master of his own life, and cannot confer on his physician the right he has not himself." The oath of Hippocrates also declares "No inducements shall ever lead me to administer poison, and my sole end shall be to relieve and cure my patients, and to render myself worthy of their confidence." The peculiar province of a physician, as Marx well observes, is to prolong life, not to shorten it. "Let us never expose ourselves," says Simon, "by our negligence, or by criminal prepossession of mind to the guilt of abridging by one day the existence of a single individual; one day of repentance and love may redeem a whole life." A case which, to a certain extent, was illustrative of this latter remark occurred in our own connexion some years ago. A wealthy octogenarian, afflicted with disease of the stomach, and unable to take nourishment in the usual way, without its being immediately returned, had his life prolonged for a fortnight by enemata of strong broths, &c. During this fortnight he was persuaded to alter his will, and to do tardy justice to his faithful partner, for whom he had previously inadequately provided.

Further, as it is the duty of a physician to strive to prolong life, it is his duty also to strive to make that

life as supportable as possible, and to use his *medical influence for the bodily comfort and well-being of the sick*. Our author, indeed, compares the relation between physician and patient, to that between mother and child, the one naturally looking to the other for support and protection. A medical man will often have under his care patients who may be at a distance from their home and friends, and who are entirely surrounded by strangers. On him will especially devolve the duty of watching over the comfort of a patient thus circumstanced, and if the individual be unable to act for himself, of seeing that proper attention is paid to him, that efficient nurses are provided for him, and that these do their duty. The powerful pencil of a Dickens has been employed to portray the miseries endured by a friendless patient in the hands of a mercenary and unfeeling nurse, who takes away the pillow from under the sufferer's head to make her own chair more comfortable, &c. &c., and though the picture is highly coloured, it doubtless, has truth for its original. Who that has seen much practice, either private or public, has not had to complain of the indifference, ignorance, and carelessness of hireling nurses; and if no relatives or attached friends are at hand, it is incumbent upon the medical man carefully to watch the conduct of such attendants, and take care that they do not abuse their opportunities. He would ill fulfil his mission as the friend and guardian of the sick, if, in such circumstances, he were to confine himself, in his visits, to strictly medical inquiries and attentions. And here we must quote some excellent remarks of Dr. Holland, remarks, the value of which we have again and again tested in the course of our own practice. "The physician who leaves the bedroom of his patient, especially in cases of fever or acute disorder, without attending to more than the prescription of medicine and diet, has very imperfectly fulfilled his office. He is

bound, further, to look to temperature and ventilation, the fit state of the patient's bed, his posture, the needful changes of clothing, the proper use of water for cleanliness or coolness, and the maintenance of quiet. These things, contributing alike to the comfort of the patient, and the chances of recovery from disease, are often, it must be allowed, passed over, or too hastily dealt with, in the hurry of practice ; an omission the more important, as many of them are expressly the subjects of popular prejudice and mischievous error, and as it frequently happens that the patient himself is wholly unable to explain what is thus needful to his situation. The ability and good faith of the practitioner are equally put to the test in these less ostentatious parts of his science, as in those to which common opinion assigns a higher value." A medical man will always find it expedient to rely chiefly, if not exclusively, upon his own observations in reference to the facts of disease, and not to trust to the reports of nurses, since, from a deficiency in the cultivation of the observing faculty, the statements of uneducated persons respecting matters relating to disease, are seldom either correct or complete.

In cases of severe and dangerous illness, a medical man should generally use his influence to obtain the services of professed nurses, as persons connected with the patient are very apt to be disqualified, by their feelings, from acting with energy and firmness. There are, in connexion with the conduct of Desgenettes at Jaffa, some interesting observations in Marx's Letter, on hospital treatment. There is, indeed, a great improvement in the views entertained, both by the profession and the public in general, as to the accommodation of the sick in these institutions ; but the necessity for watchfulness is by no means past, especially as regards those establishments which are under the control of governing bodies, whose chief object is to do everything

as cheaply as possible. Whenever a medical man has a number of patients collected together and consigned to his care, whether in a jail, a poor-house, or an hospital, he ought to consider that all which pertains to diet and other hygienic measures belongs to him, and he does not fulfil his duty unless he rigidly scrutinizes these matters, and enters a protest whenever his directions are thwarted and nullified, as did the honorable man who stood forth in behalf of the paupers of the Andover union.

Professor Marx finely says that man cannot bear to be viewed merely as an object of medical treatment, and we should ever consider that the mind has an important influence in sickness. Our author asserts, from statistical observation, that with all the increased comfort and assistance afforded to the poor in hospitals, the recoveries are yet numerically less than those who remain in their own dwellings; the fact speaks strongly as to the influence of the mind in disease, and serves to add weight to Percival's recommendation not to frustrate the benevolent constitutions of Heaven by dissolving the salutary connexions of sickness, and transporting into a public asylum those who may, with a little aid, enjoy, in their own homes, benefits and consolations which, elsewhere, it is in the power of no one to confer. Persons accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of a superior position in life are often unnecessarily affected by the sight of the inconveniences to which the sick poor are subjected in their own dwellings, and forgetting the power of habit in reconciling men to these circumstances, will try to prevail upon them to become the inmates of hospitals, when they would greatly prefer to put up with these privations, and still to enjoy the care of those they best love, and to whose attentions they are accustomed. Such efforts, however well-intentioned, are mistaken. "The visitation of sickness is a wise and kind dispensation of Providence, intended to humble, to

refine, and to meliorate the heart ; and its salutary influence extends beyond the sufferer to those relatives and friends whose office it is to minister unto him ; exciting tenderness and commiseration, drawing closer the bonds of affection, and rousing to exertions, virtuous in their nature, profitable to man, and well-pleasing to God. A parent soothed and supported, under the anguish of pain, by the loving-kindness of his children, a husband nursed with unwearied assiduity by the partner of his bed, a child experiencing all the tenderness of paternal and maternal love, are situations which form the groundwork of domestic virtue and domestic felicity. They leave indelible impressions on the mind—impressions which exalt the moral character, and render us better men, better citizens, and better Christians.”* But there are numerous classes of patients who either have no friends, or whose friends are unable or unwilling to bestow upon them proper attention ; to these, as well as to the many others who require assistance they cannot get elsewhere, hospital institutions are of immense benefit ; and it is a part of medical ethics to take care that the mind as well as the body should receive in them due regard, that they should be treated with uniform kindness, sympathy, and respect ; and so as to remove, as far as possible, the depressing idea that they are regarded as mere subjects for experimentation and scientific scrutiny. The practice which prevails in some foreign hospitals of lecturing on the disease of patients in their presence, in a language which they can understand, is deeply to be censured as most cruel and mischievous. In all cases, whether of private or public patients, it should be the endeavour of the medical man to

* Percival.—How far the present classification system in our Union Houses is calculated to elevate the standard of our people as to the domestic affections, is, we think, a point of more importance than even economical regulations.

cheer and support the mind of the sufferer. "In every situation," says Simon, "the burden of sickness is heavy to bear, and the medical man cannot, without partly abdicating his office, neglect any means of lightening it. Amenity, mildness, assiduous attentions, the sweet illusions of hope, make themselves, in every case, a way to the heart of him who suffers, and charm away pain."

It is of great moment that a cheerful and hopeful tone of mind should be kept up in the sick; the apprehension of danger is in itself sometimes sufficient to produce danger. But how far is it lawful for a medical man to animate the hopes of his patient, and subdue his fears, at the expense of truth? We have seen what was the conduct of Desgenettes at Jaffa; that, contrary to his own full conviction, he endeavoured to produce the impression that the plague was not contagious, and that his efforts were partially successful, inspiring a greater composure of mind, mitigating the symptoms of the disease where it existed, and multiplying the number of convalescents. Simon, again, whose opinion is the more to be regarded, as the tone of his work is one of high moral and religious elevation, says, "Whatever may be his internal convictions, or even his conjectures, with respect to the character of an endemic malady, the physician ought always to pronounce it not contagious." And if he ought to do this, it follows, by parity of reasoning, that he ought to violate truth in other analogous circumstances: for instance, to assure a patient that there is no danger, whatever may be his opinion of the case. This subject, though at first sight it appears easily decided, is, in reality, encompassed with difficulties, and has drawn forth opposite opinions from men of great eminence. Is it lawful to do evil that good may come? We think not; and whether the expected good does in the long run result from a direct violation of the great and eternal principles of truth is very proble-

matical. We see no reason why a *medical liar* should be exempted from the common and ancient experience, that liars are not always believed, even when they speak the truth. The good which is done by deception soon ceases, and when men begin to suspect that they have been deceived, they often disbelieve, not merely the particular fact which has been attempted to be imposed on them, but also everything else which emanates from the same source. In the case of an epidemic, we much doubt whether attempts to keep the public in ignorance would not ultimately tend rather to increase than diminish alarm and depression of mind; because a sort of vague fear, a not knowing what to expect, is more oppressive to the spirits than any certainty, after once men have become accustomed to the idea. How long will medical men gain credence to their assertions of the non-contagious nature of a complaint when hourly experience contradicts those assertions? It can only be in the commencement of an epidemic that attempts to blind the public to its real character can be successful, and this success is attended and counterbalanced by another evil, that of inducing a mischievous security and neglect of due precautions. The preferable method, we think, would be to be silent as to the character of the disease until imperatively called on to declare our judgment, and then to explain its nature, obviate as much as possible all the imaginary horrors with which it is sure to be popularly invested, pointing out the measures most likely to prevent its further progress. The general at the head of an army does not attempt to inspire his soldiers with courage by telling them that balls do not penetrate or sabres wound. No! they know too much to believe him if he did; but they gain courage from the conviction that he shares their dangers, that he has taken every reasonable precaution to lessen them and to ensure victory, so that their lives are not likely to be cheaply or fruitlessly sacrificed.

It is not only, however, in epidemics, which are of comparatively rare occurrence, that the question involved in the transactions at Jaffa comes before us. It arises frequently in ordinary practice, and especially in these two forms: whether it is lawful to deceive a patient for his good, and whether we are bound to acquaint him of his danger? The two cases, indeed, are nearly allied, and may well be considered together. As might be expected, in points of such difficulty, there is a great difference of opinion.

Dr. Samuel Johnson, with his characteristic straightforwardness, says, "You have no business with consequences, you are to tell the truth. Besides, you are not sure what effect your telling a man that he is in danger may have. It may bring his disorder to a crisis, and that may cure him. Of all lying I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practised on myself."

Percival, on the contrary, who quotes the above opinion of Johnson, says, after much cautious discussion of the case, "To a patient, perhaps the father of a numerous family, or one whose life is of the highest importance to the community, who makes inquiries, which, if faithfully answered, might prove fatal to him, it would be a gross and unfeeling wrong to reveal the truth. His *right to it is suspended and even annihilated*, because its beneficial nature being reversed, it would be deeply injurious to himself, to his family, and to the public, and he has the strongest claim, from the trust reposed in his physician, as well as from the common principles of humanity, to be guarded against whatever would be detrimental to him." It seems to us that the principle here laid down of the sick man's right to truth being suspended, is both an unsafe and an unsound one. Many convenient falsehoods might be justified on the ground of the inquirer's right to truth being sus-

pended. Thus Sir Walter Scott was accustomed to justify giving a flat denial of the authorship of Waverley when sometimes asked the question, by saying that it was one which the questioner had no right to ask. It may be very truly said that a sick man's right to be *answered at all* is suspended, and a medical man, we think, would very properly decline satisfying inquiries of the kind supposed, either waving the question or saying that it was against his practice to give such information, &c.

Hufeland speaks very strongly against disclosures of the truth to patients. "The physician," he says, "must be careful to preserve hope and courage in the patient's mind, represent his case in a favorable light, conceal all danger from him, and the more serious it becomes, show a more cheerful appearance, and, least of all, betray uncertainty and irresolution, although there be cause for doubt. He can guard himself from the suspicion of not having fully appreciated the nature of the case, by giving a true description of the patient's situation to the relatives, and if they be fickle or negligent, to state it rather darker than lighter. Hence it will appear how blameable is the conduct of those physicians who do not hesitate to announce to the sick the danger, even fatality, of their situation, and how injudiciously those relatives act who desire the physician to do so. To announce death is to give death, which is never the business of him who is employed to save life. *Even if the sick person desires to know the truth, under a pretence of arranging his affairs or the like, it is not advisable to pronounce his sentence.*" This view appears to us one fraught with distressing consequences, both to the patient and to surrounding relatives; to the patient, whom it may deprive of his last chance of a due preparation for approaching change; to the relatives, whose prospects for life may hang upon his final disposition of affairs. Far more really humane, we think, are the sentiments of our own Gregory: "It

sometimes happens that a man is seized with a dangerous illness who has made no settlement of his affairs, and yet, perhaps, the future happiness of his family may depend on his making such a settlement. In this and other similar cases it may be proper for a physician, in the most prudent and gentle manner, to give a hint to the patient of his real danger, and even solicit him to set about this necessary duty. But in every case it behoves a physician never to conceal the real situation of the patient from the relations."

Gisborne speaks to the same effect, but more positively, as might be expected from a non-professional writer. "The physician may not be bound, unless expressly required, invariably to divulge at any specific time his opinion concerning the uncertainty or danger of the case; but he is invariably bound never to represent the uncertainty or danger at less than he actually believes it to be, and whenever he conveys, directly or indirectly, to the patient or to his family any impression to that effect, though he may be misled by mistaken tenderness, he is guilty of positive falsehood. *He is at liberty to say little; but let that little be true.* St. Paul's direction, not to do evil that good may come, is clear, positive, and universal. And if the Scriptures had contained no injunction such as that which has been quoted, but had left the physician at liberty to decide the point on grounds of expediency, he would have had sufficient reason to be convinced that falsehood could promise but little even of the temporary advantage expected from it. For when once his employers should know, and they must soon know, his principle and custom to be that of not adhering to truth in his declarations respecting his patient, his vain encouragements and delusive assurances would cease to cheer the sick man and his friends. It may be urged, perhaps, that his reserve will generally be misconstrued by the anxiety of those who are interested for the sick, and being considered as

a proof of his opinion that the disorder is highly formidable, will continually foster or excite apprehensions as groundless as they are distressing. A moderate share, however, of prudence, united with that facility which is naturally acquired by practice, of avoiding needless disclosures, and avoiding them without sliding into deceit, either expressly or impliedly, will enable him to guard against producing unnecessary alarms. And they will be still less likely to be produced, if the uniformity of his conduct makes it evident to those who employ him that, while he cautiously refrains from representing the case before him in a more favorable light than he views it, he is equally solicitous and watchful to give early communications of probable or actual danger. The state of the malady, when critical or hazardous, ought to be plainly declared, without delay, to some at least of the patient's near relations, and, except under extraordinary circumstances, to the nearest. On many occasions it may be the duty of the physician spontaneously to reveal it to the patient himself. It may sometimes also be incumbent upon him to suggest to the sick man, or to his friends, the propriety of adjusting all unfinished temporal concerns."

The opinions which have stood the test of practical experience, and of experience gained in modern circumstances, are, after all, the most valuable ; and it is, therefore, with singular satisfaction that we give the wise and judicious counsels of Dr. Watson. When speaking of prognosis, he says, " Our influence over a sick person, and the efficacy of many of our remedial measures, are remarkably increased by the reliance he places on our skill, and by our apparent acquaintance with the nature of his complaint. It is often of material consequence in another point of view that the fatal character of a disease should be plainly perceived. A sick man aware of his danger is

furnished with a motive and an opportunity for arranging his worldly affairs, in the settlement of which the future comfort and happiness of his family may be very deeply concerned, for making his will, and also for more solemn preparation for the awful change that awaits him. For these reasons medical men have, in all periods, endeavoured to read in the phenomena presented to them by diseases, the event to which those diseases tend. To *form* an accurate opinion on this head, however, is one thing, to *divulge* it another. There is always some risk of losing as well as of gaining credit by strong statements, and predictions of the death or the recovery of a patient. If you give an unfavorable prognosis, you have a good chance of losing your patient altogether; his friends argue, very naturally, that if you know of no means of safety for him, some other practitioner may, and they will grasp at whatever straw comes near them. Do not suppose that this is merely a selfish view of the matter; it is often of much moment to the patient himself that he should not be tempted to put his life under the charge of impostors, who will feed his hopes and promise him largely, and torture him, perhaps, with their discipline, and have no mercy upon his pocket. Many an instance have I known of persons dying of consumption, who, when given over by their regular attendants, have been brought to London, at considerable expense, to exchange the comforts of home for the inconveniences of a hired lodging, that they might be *cured* by that ignorant and cruel and rapacious quack, Mr. St. John Long. There are other reasons, too, why we must sometimes conceal the truth from our patients. It often happens that a person is extremely ill, and in great danger, but yet may recover if he is not informed of his peril. To tell a person in these circumstances that he is likely to die, is to destroy his *chance* of recovery. You kill him if you take away his hope of living. It must be confessed, that the duty of the

medical man in these cases is very painful and embarrassing: the patient and the patient's friends are urgently inquisitive to know whether there is any danger, or whether he is not yet out of danger. The rule which I have always adopted, in circumstances of this distressing kind, when I see clearly that the case is hopeless of cure, is to fix as well as I can upon that person among the family or friends of the patient to whose prudence the real state of the matter may be the most safely confided. If I think that there is a possible chance of recovery, and that a knowledge of his danger by the patient would diminish that chance, of course I urge the necessity of speaking to *him* with assumed cheerfulness and confidence: if I see that the case is absolutely and inevitably mortal, either soon, or at some little distance of time, I leave it to the discretion of the person with whom I communicate to disclose or conceal my opinion as he or she may think best. There are, I believe, practitioners who make it a point, on principles of worldly policy, *never* to speak despairingly of a patient; but I cannot regard such a rule of conduct as honest or justifiable, or consistent with one's Christian duty."

To this sound and excellent advice we heartily subscribe our assent; and we would further remark, that the conduct of the medical man must necessarily be modified by his knowledge of the character, strength of mind, and previous life of the patient. When the dying Arnold appealed to his physician for a true opinion on his case, who could have dared to answer the noble-minded and truthful sufferer with a falsehood? "He then," says his biographer, in narrating the affecting scene, "with his eyes fixed upon the physician, who *rather felt than saw them upon him, so as to make it impossible not to answer the exact truth*, repeated one or two of his former questions about the cause of his disease, and ended with asking 'Is it likely to return?' and being told it was, 'is it generally suddenly

fatal?' 'Generally.''' On Hufeland's principle, a directly contrary reply ought to have been given; but vain would have been the deception! for in a few moments afterwards the physician, who was preparing the medicine, looked round, and saw the last brief struggle commenced.—As in this case, so in others, we see that those whom it is of least importance to warn, of whom we may be tolerably sure that death can never find them unprepared, are those who can best bear the intelligence. We have ourselves sometimes seen that the certain knowledge of their true state has had an influence in *calming* the minds of patients. We have seen in lingering diseases, such as phthisis, for instance, cases in which great irritability and impatience had been manifested during the previous periods of suffering, in which as soon as the individuals had been apprised of the hopelessness of their malady, calmness and resignation have taken possession of their minds,—a change somewhat similar to that of the ancient Jewish monarch, who while the child was yet alive fasted and prayed, but as soon as it was dead he arose from the earth, "and did eat bread."

In certain states of disease, however, great caution is required even in acquainting relatives with the exact state the patient is in; his life may hang upon a thread, but too easily broken by mismanagement. Thus Dr. Graves says of the moral management in fever, "Friends or relatives are seldom found capable of discharging this office. If they chance to discover from the physician's remarks or questions the weak points of the patient's case, they generally contrive to let him know them in some way or other. If the patient is restless, for instance, the ill-judged anxiety of his friends will most certainly prevent him from sleeping; hence, when you give an opiate, you should not in any case say anything about it."

Professor Marx speaks in favour of a firm, nay, sometimes peremptory manner as becoming a medical man:

“ Decision is better than timid practice.” The decision which is desirable in a medical man is the result of a clear judgment, of presence of mind, and of moral courage, and need not be connected with that roughness and coarseness of manner which has sometimes been considered as an infallible indication of superior strength of mind. On this subject Simon remarks : “ Some physicians, amongst whom we shall only cite Bouvart, Dupuytren, Abernethy, instead of that amenity of manner and language which so well becomes the medical man in the exercise of his profession, were accustomed to employ towards the sick an imperious familiarity, which sometimes, as we cannot forbear saying, degenerated into an improper want of feeling. Cannot the husk lose a little of its coarseness without the kernel losing its vigour? How was it that men of such superior understanding did not observe the jarring discord which existed between their words and actions ?”

Dr. Burder, in a letter to Dr. Theophilus Thompson, makes some useful remarks as to the kind of manner best adapted to inspire confidence. “ Doubtless a confident manner, and an oracular expression of opinion, superficial and inaccurate though it may be, obtain from the multitude an undue respect *at first*, but the more modest and highly qualified man will ultimately surmount any real or supposed external deficiencies, while every instance of gratifying confidence will do much to give a legitimately authoritative address. Close attention, unaffected interest and earnestness, careful investigation, and perfect candour and simplicity, are qualities which almost every one can appreciate, and which will eventually command a more extensive influence than all the arts and manœuvres of self-confident boasters. At all events, a man’s natural manner is the best for himself, since it accords with his mind and character, and being natural, will give a genuineness, for which all the elegances and studied doings of others cannot compensate.”

A medical man sometimes has his firmness and decision of character tried by the unreasonable and unwarrantable interference of non-medical persons, either friends of the patient or official authorities, with his judgment and practice. Perhaps courses of treatment are recommended, and urgent importunities used to prevail on him to adopt them. Persons have sometimes theories of their own, or theories which they have adopted from their former medical attendants, and they wish to make the medical man a mere instrument for the purpose of carrying out their own views. Professor Marx, in a note, gives a curious instance of this sort of lay interference in Frederick II, and another may be found in Townsend's 'Journey through Spain,' where it is related that, during the prevalence of a putrid fever, in 1784, the court issued an order to the physicians to use no medicine except a certain opiate. Against the mandates of despotic sovereigns there is not of course much to be done ; but for the mandates of official bodies in this country, or the mandates of private individuals, there is a remedy, and whatever may be the rank of the patient, or the importance of the situation, the physician had better resign the case than compromise his conscience and medical reputation. A characteristic example of the kind of decision and peremptoriness which the Letter recommends is given in Sir Astley Cooper's Life, in an anecdote of Sir William Knighton. The Duke of Wellington, it seems, was ill, and George IV asked if he would go out that day. Knighton said, "I ordered him not." The king said, smiling, "You *ordered* him not? Could not you have thought of a better word?" (thinking it perhaps presumptuous in any one to issue orders to the conqueror of Spain.) "No, Sire," said Knighton ; "I *ordered* him not. If a man does not attend to his friend and physician, he had better have neither."—"As we went out of the room," says Sir Astley, "I said 'you are a pretty fellow ;' and he said, 'Oh ! that was intended for him !'"

In speaking of medical decision, Professor Marx says, "A journey often depends on it." Those physicians who practise in the watering-places of our land have frequent occasion to deprecate the decisions which send patients far from the comforts of home, at a time when it is but too obvious that no change of climate can benefit them, and that the only result can be that they must die amongst strangers, or attended, perhaps, by some afflicted relative, whose anxieties are sadly aggravated by an isolated position. We remember, a few years since, seeing an interesting woman, the mother of a large family, who had been sent from one of our northern counties to the southern coast. The merest tyro in medicine might have instantly discovered that her malady was hopeless, yet she had been induced to take this long journey, to tear herself away from the dearest objects of her heart, thus anticipating the inevitable parting, to resign the company of her afflicted husband, who, distracted between the urgent claims of his profession and the desire to be with his dying wife, could only hurry to and fro, from one to another, in a state of mind more easily conceived than described; and all this really, as it would seem, for no other purpose than to save the medical attendant from the pain of having his patient die under his own care. The frequent exclamation of the poor sufferer, and that almost in her last hours, was, "Oh! how cruel it was of Doctor ——— to send me away from my dear children." Had the change of climate been recommended in an earlier stage of the complaint, the result might have been different.

Gisborne, in describing the conduct of a conscientious physician, says, "He will not, in dangerous or hopeless maladies, advise a journey merely to remove the sufferer to a distance, instead of having him continue at home to die under his immediate care." Without supposing that selfish or improper motives are often concerned in these recommendations, we may, at least, predicate that there is a

great error in judgment often manifested in cases of the kind we have quoted, and still more so where, as is sometimes the case, patients are induced to remove into foreign countries for the same purpose. Dr. Simon writes very strongly and explicitly on the subject: "There is a practice to which medical men commonly have recourse in incurable maladies, which consists in sending to watering-places invalids thus affected, or advising them to undertake voyages without very positive therapeutic indications. It is impossible not to see that there is occasionally, in this conduct, a degree of inconsideration, an unfeeling cruelty, or even a blameable calculation." Hear first the sensible observations of J. Frank on this point: "Knowing the expenses inseparable from long voyages, I am cautious in advising these emigrations to distant countries, undertaken on account of health. If the invalid be not opulent, the ruin of his patrimony, the disarrangement of his domestic affairs, the inconveniences of the voyage, will do him more harm than he will reap good from the best climate. Besides, it is cruel to prescribe these voyages to sick persons who have parents, husbands, or wives. I have myself been the witness of tragical scenes which were caused, in these circumstances, by the conflict between the desire of saving the life of a beloved object and the impossibility of undertaking the voyage." "There are cases," Dr. Simon adds, "in which motives of another order, and more medical, if we may say so, enjoin even yet more imperiously this prudent circumspection. These cases are those in which the advanced state of a malady renders these voyages useless, and in which the inevitable fatigues of such a removal must tend to precipitate the fatal result. It is evident that nothing can justify the physician who, to rekindle in the heart of a poor patient an extinct hope, gives him a counsel which may have such serious consequences. It is, no doubt, painful to attend daily an in-

valid merely to witness the powerlessness of remedies, but it is yet more painful to have to resolve this formidable question which conscience never fails to put to us, —Have you, by an imprudent counsel, helped to abridge life ?”

There are, as Dr. Simon observes, invalids who will importune the medical man to obtain his consent to a voyage or journey, which he may well know will not only be useless but hurtful to them, and in these cases he must have the firmness to resist, and endeavour, by ingenious contrivances at home, to give them as much as possible of those advantages which a change of climate might afford, without subjecting them to its concomitant fatigues and hardships. These remarks of course are not intended in the slightest degree to discredit the value of climate as an important prophylactic and remedial agent. The same experience which places us in a position to observe the pernicious effects of injudicious removals, enables us, also, to estimate the great value of a timely removal to a suitable locality. “During that peculiar state of deranged health,” says Sir James Clark, “which may often be observed to precede tuberculous cachexia, and during the existence of this morbid state of the constitution, before the disease has manifested itself in the actual development of tubercles in the lungs, change of climate forms a most powerful adjunct to the other means best calculated for removing such a state of the system. When tubercles already exist in the lungs, the chances of cure are immeasurably lessened ; but even then climate affords one of our most valuable resources, and one which promotes the salutary action of other remedies.” Many similar remarks occur in the works of this excellent writer.

Whenever, either in incipient consumption, or for other complaints, a medical man feels it his duty to recommend

change of climate, he should endeavour to adapt his advice to the circumstances, calling in life, and family connexions of the patient, bearing in mind that no climate can be expected to be very beneficial, when its influence is counteracted by a weight of anxiety and harassing care being on the mind of the expatriated invalid. Some years ago, a solicitor in an extensive business, and with a large family, fell into an ill state of health through too great mental application. He was told that nothing but a sea voyage could save him. He came to London, and consulted, in much perplexity and distress of mind, the late Dr. James Johnson, who, perceiving how the case stood, recommended him to try short excursions by sea or land, but never to be absent from home more than a fortnight at a time, remarking, at the same time, on the uselessness of sending a man so engaged to a great distance from his sphere of action. The advice seemed to remove from the patient's mind a load of insupportable care; he followed it, and soon recovered his health.

There is another situation in which the medical man's office, as the friend and guardian of the sick, is peculiarly called into exercise—a situation which calls rather for moral than strictly medical treatment. This is old age. When mind and body are slowly but surely decaying, and yet there is but little to excite sympathy, or to call forth the exertion of professional skill, when the nearest and dearest have, perhaps, preceded the aged patient into another world, when those around him are looking forward with something of desire to be rid of the burden of attendance, the humane physician will feel it his duty, by kind and judicious attentions, “to smooth the pillow of declining age,” suggesting such considerations as may best tend to promote cheerfulness and the patient endurance of unavoidable infirmities; not, on the one hand, pandering to the love of life by pernicious medical interference, or, on the other hand, neglecting to do anything which can

reasonably be expected to alleviate suffering and prolong existence.

“It is often an exceedingly nice question of conscience,” says Dr. Holland, “as well as of opinion, to define the extent to which practice may rightly proceed in such circumstances ; always admitting, as must be done, that something is due to the feelings of the patient ; something, also, to the uncertainty of our own judgments, antecedently to actual experience.” The case which Dr. Holland is supposing is, when, in old age, irretrievable changes have occurred in any organ or function of the body ; and he says of it : “To urge medical treatment in the face of distinct proof to this effect, is to sacrifice at once the good faith and usefulness of the profession.” He adds, “This question in medical morals, like so many others, cannot be treated as a general principle only. The integrity and discretion of the practitioner must ever be appealed to for guidance in the endless variety of particular cases. In some, concession to a certain extent is safe, or even justified by indirect advantage to the patient. In others, mischief alone can arise from this meddling with the course of nature, and bad faith or bad judgment are involved in every such act of practice.” Cases occur in elderly persons of diseases requiring surgical operations for their extirpation ; and here it becomes a matter of nice calculation to determine whether the age and strength of the patient will warrant their performance. Sir Anthony Carlisle says, “Dangerous operations are rarely advisable in advanced age, because the living powers are then diminished, and old persons are seldom exempt from constitutional disorders. The disastrous consequences of unsuccessful or imprudent operations are most extensively injurious, and those desperate expedients are not justifiable upon the false and horrible plea that the value of life decreases as age advances.” Sir Anthony lays down the following rules (amongst others), which we think important :

“ Whenever the immediate danger to life, from a surgical operation, exceeds the probability of recovery from its effects, the act is unjustifiable.

“ When the consequences of a mortal disease are only to be averted by a dangerous operation, the enterprise then may be expedient.

“ The performance of surgical operations upon old persons for the removal of harmless tumours, or mere deformities, ought to be objected to.”

In regard to the question of operations on the aged, as well as in other analogous cases, a medical man should carefully weigh the degree of suffering involved in the operation, as compared with the disease, the probability of recovery afterwards, &c., and then ask himself whether, if similarly situated, he should not only be willing, but should think it right to undergo it. “ Medical judgment,” as Sir A. Carlisle remarks, “ is not infallible, and the event of recovery from the most hopeless state is seldom impossible ; but to preclude even a forlorn chance, or to abridge the sufferer of one lingering moment, is far beyond the province of medical men.”

We take but a narrow as well as cheerless view of old age, if we regard it as merely characterized by privations and infirmities. It has its privileges and its pleasures. Dr. Canstatt has finely described the mental state of the aged in the following passage : “ The aged man is observant, and thinks deeply on particular circumstances. He carries his affairs of business into the depths of his soul. Caution and profound thought take the place of early levity. The honour of a cautious and mature judgment belongs to the aged. His conclusions bear the stamp of deep thought and experience. The fire of the passions and emotions burns dimly in him ; he is now free from the storm which once roused an uproar in his soul. Conscious how transitory are both joy and sorrow, he

looks calmly and self-collectedly on the circumstances amidst which his short life is prolonged. The present has no value for him ; he lives only in the recollection of the past, and is an intolerant censor of the present, because he compares the shadows of age with the brightness of his youthful years.” Another description of old age, equally, if not more beautiful, occurs in Dr. Moore’s recent work, ‘The Use of the Body in Relation to the Mind.’ “How instructive is the usual state of memory and hope in advanced life! As the senses become dull, the nervous system slow, and the whole body unfit for active uses, the old man necessarily falls into a constant abstraction. Like all debilitated persons, he feels his unfitness for action, and, of course, becomes querulous if improperly excited. Peacefulness, gentle exercise among flowers and trees,* unstimulating diet, and the quiet company of books and philosophic toys, are suitable for him. With such helps, his heart will beat kindly, and his intellect, however childlike, will maintain a beautiful power to the last. Objects of affection occasionally move him with more than their accustomed force. Young children are especially agreeable to him. When approaching him with the gentle love and reverence which unspoiled children are apt to exhibit, his heart seems suddenly to kindle as the little fingers wander over his shrivelled hand and wrinkled brow. He smiles, and goes back in spirit to his childhood, and finds a world of fun, frolic, and loveliness all alive before him, and he has tales of joy and beauty, which children, and age, and holy beings can best appreciate. Next to the children of his children, the old man, whose thoughts have been directed by the Bible, loves the society of persons of holy habits, and as he finds these more frequently among females, such are generally his associates. He

*. See Wordsworth’s exquisite description of the old Cumberland beggar.

realizes most fully the facts of a coming life, and even now lives apart from the present ; and if his habits of reflection be not distracted, and his heart broken by hard and ignorant treatment, and if his soul have not been wedded to care by a love of gold, beyond the possibility of divorce, and Mammon have not branded his spirit with indelible misery, then is the old man ready to enter on a spiritual existence with alacrity and joy. If his employments now suit the state of his body, his feelings and his thoughts are already accordant with a better world. His memory and will are in general so occupied by merely mental objects, as to convince him, as if with the force of a sensible demonstration, of the reality of things beyond the scope of sense."—A benevolent medical man will not think his time or his efforts misapplied, if he can suggest or procure to the aged such means of occupation and amusement as are most in harmony with the views here presented. A little cheerful conversation on past events and characters is often a wonderful restorative to the old, and as the tendency of their period of life is generally to egotism, a medical man may beneficially direct his efforts against this evil, calling their attention (if rich) to such cases of distress as are sure to fall in his way, and endeavouring to inspire them with compassionate sympathy for the poor and afflicted. How much may thus be done towards kindling the flame of benevolence, and that not merely in the aged, but in all those with whom the physician comes in contact ! Who so well acquainted as he with the sufferings of the sick poor, and by thus bringing them before the notice of his richer patients, he may, if he is careful to avoid indiscreet and officious importunity, confer an important benefit, not only on the poor, but on the rich, who often only need to be made acquainted with deserving cases at once to be willing to administer relief.

One other topic remains to be noticed, a topic which is adverted to in the Letter to Desgenettes in the following terms. "That the physician who awakens confidence should also be taken into confidence appears in ordinary life natural." It must, indeed, be evident that a profession which has so much to do with the hopes and fears of mankind—a profession, whose members have it so much in their power to minister to the comfort and relief of men, who are admitted, moreover, into their most secret privacies, who see them in their most unguarded moments—must afford great opportunities for gaining influence. It has sometimes happened that this influence has been used to acquire a power over the patient, almost as great as that of a confessor, and based on very similar foundations. It becomes then necessary to inquire when this influence is legitimately exercised, and in what respects it is liable to abuse.

The form of influence which Professor Marx specifies is political influence, and the fate of Struensee is adduced as a warning against attempts to acquire political power through the medical character. Our own country, and the form of our government, does not give that scope to personal favoritism, which in other countries has enabled him who holds an empire over the health of his sovereign to use him as a tool for his own purposes. Could we unravel the secret history of courts, we might perhaps discover even in our own minor degrees of this exercise of influence.

Our immortal bard, who appears to have fathomed the hearts and purposes of men in every position of life, has not left unnoticed the influence which the physician of a prince may exercise with his sovereign to aid or overthrow political intrigues, when he makes Dr. Butts, in order to prevent the downfall of Cranmer, tell the

king of the disgrace which had been put upon the archbishop :

Butts. I'll show your grace the strangest sight.

King Henry. What's that, Butts?

Butts. I think your highness saw this many a day.

King H. Body o' me, what is it?

Butts. There, my lord,

The high promotion of his Grace of Canterbury,
Who holds his state at door 'midst pursuivants,
Pages, and footboys.

King H. Ho! 'tis he, indeed.

Is this the honour they do one another?

'Tis well there's one above them yet. I had thought

They had parted so much honesty among them,

(At least good manners) as not thus to suffer

A man of his place, and so near our favour,

To dance attendance on their lordships' pleasure,

And at the door too, like a post with packets.

By holy Mary! Butts, there's knavery!

HENRY VIII.

Strype, in his 'Life of Archbishop Cranmer,' also describes the honorable conduct of Dr. Butts in this matter, p. 125.

Marx well observes, that when medical influence is used for political purposes it is very difficult to act so as to be secure from animadversions. We have an instance of an admirable use of medical influence for a political purpose in the case of Broughton, who used his favour with an Indian sovereign to procure a grant of land, and permission to build a factory at Calcutta, and thus laid the foundation of our Indian possessions.

Missionary operations have also been efficiently served through the influence of medical character over the minds of native heathen princes. But leaving these cases, which are of less frequent occurrence, and only affect the few, we come to the more ordinary aspects of the subject.

In respect of politics, Marx says, "A physician belongs

to no party." He does not indeed lose his rights as a man or a citizen ; to him, as to others, are open all *legitimate* efforts to promote the good of his country, but we do not think he ought to use his *medical* character for party purposes. We know of one instance in which this was done, in which a medical practitioner, residing in a small borough, was accustomed extensively to influence elections for members of parliament by means of the votes of his poorer patients. Apart from the consideration of the rectitude of such a practice, or of others akin to it, the hot and eager pursuit of politics is highly unfavorable to the character of the practitioner himself. The result in the case we have present to our minds, was that the individual became absorbed in political intrigues and coteries, neglected his own peculiar duties, and finally lost his practice. In the opinion of the wise Hallé, the study of medicine is quite sufficient to occupy a whole life, and there needs not to add to it the pursuits and associations necessary to political partisanship.

Medical influence is legitimately exercised to turn a patient from vicious and destructive courses. There are diseases which are dependent on vicious habits, and which, though they may not immediately destroy life, yet infallibly undermine the constitution, and even affect the next generation. A medical man does but fulfil his high calling by bringing to bear on the mind of his patient all the force of authoritative denunciation, and thereby exciting a salutary fear of consequences. Again, where the ardour of professional and literary distinction, or the thirst of riches, is impelling a man to efforts which the physician knows must bring on disease, he may, and ought, to use his influence to effect a partial or entire alteration in the habits, to persuade to the relinquishment of business, to a change of abode, or such other measures as appear imperative.

A medical man, in the pursuance of his vocation, often becomes intrusted with the secrets of families ; he knows, it may be, of unhappy differences between husband and wife, between brother and brother, between parent and child, and his influence is most legitimately and beneficially employed in healing these differences, and reuniting the broken threads of friendship and relationship. Thus an eminent living physician was the means of restoring to the affections of a parent, a daughter alienated by unsanctioned marriage. The physician was called to attend the father, a man eminent in rank, station, and character, and he pleaded so forcibly in behalf of the exiled daughter, that he at last obtained permission to introduce her to the parent's presence, and has ever since been regarded as the benefactor of the family.

Medical influence is legitimately used to promote the exercise of benevolence towards deserving objects, and the exercise of justice in the timely and equitable settlement of property. In short, for the temporal, physical, and spiritual benefit of the patients, within due bounds—bounds which individual judgment can alone accurately prescribe—it is always exerted legitimately.

From all that has been said of the influence of medical men, and the opportunities they have of gaining the confidence of their patients, it may well be inferred how indispensable in the medical practitioner are the virtues of discretion and a prudent reserve. If his influence is great, his obligations to trustworthiness are great also. To him the fair, the young, the innocent, look up. He has often a knowledge of their thoughts, feelings, and desires, which requires consummate prudence and integrity, and a single eye to duty, to use aright. His conduct and deportment should at all times be such as to distance a thought of suspicion. His language should be such as an unsullied mind will suggest, and which will never offend a delicate

and right-principled person. When compelled professionally to speak on topics which in others would be indelicate, it is best to do so with gravity and simplicity, without needless circumlocutions or affected phrases.

The government of the tongue is a most essential qualification in a medical man, and especially when placed in country situations and small societies. He is liable to be beset by neighbours with inquiries as to the complaints of invalids, and, if he is not on his guard, he will probably by indiscreet remarks and incautious answers do much harm, and give great offence. Persons are generally tenacious of being talked about, and especially as regards disease. "Why do you not employ Mr. ——? he is a very able man," we once said to a friend of our own. "Because he has not yet learned to be silent, he talks about his patients;" was the reply. There are certain cases in which it is absolutely necessary for the peace of families that inviolable secrecy should be maintained, even towards the patient's nearest connexions, and here the utmost exercise of discretion is called for. The medical man is the friend and guardian of the sick, and is specially bound to *them*. He is their only refuge, and he has no right to betray their confidence. These are cases which call for much discretion and for much wisdom, but a high sense of duty will usually serve to point out the narrow way.

The knowledge which a medical man has of family secrets will often place him in difficult circumstances. As, for instance, he may be aware of the presence of insanity, or other hereditary disease in a family, and may be privately consulted on that head by a member of another family, with a view of obtaining an opinion as to the expediency of allowing a matrimonial engagement to take place. Here, on the one hand, he is bound to keep the secret of his patient, on the other, he is bound not to

deceive and mislead another. In such a case, we think it safest to decline giving his opinion, and to refer the inquirer to other means of obtaining satisfaction. Should he be tempted to give his opinion, let him not imagine that any promise of secrecy will secure it. If contrary to the wishes of any party, it is almost certain to be known. On the other hand, he may, if he sees it right, conscientiously and faithfully represent to the family in which the hereditary disqualification is supposed to exist, his own opinion as to the impropriety and inexpediency of entering into the connexion. This may give offence, but it is far more honest and honorable than the private statement of opinion to the other party.

We may appropriately add to these remarks, as to the influence of the medical man, a quotation from Gisborne : "The nature of the medical profession generally introduces the physician to such private and unreserved intercourse with the families which he attends, as is capable of being grossly abused, or of being turned to purposes of great and general utility. If he divulges those personal weaknesses, or betrays those domestic secrets which come to his knowledge in the course of his employment, if he bears tales of slander from house to house, if he fomented quarrels and aggravates misunderstandings, he is deserving of severer censure than words can convey. Whatever he witnesses humiliating and disgraceful in the habitation of one patient, he should wish to forget before he enters that of another. He ought to watch for opportunities, and embrace them, though with prudence, yet with alacrity, of removing prejudices and obviating differences between neighbours, whether arising from private disputes, from religious bigotry, or from the violence of political opposition. He may thus be the happy instrument of allaying those mental irritations which

disturb social peace, and confer, by his benevolent mediation, a more important service on the parties whom he leads to a renewal of cordiality, than if he had relieved them by his skill from an afflicting bodily disease. He may also contribute to diffuse just sentiments on a great variety of subjects, and to excite a taste for useful and liberal knowledge among those with whom he is in familiarity as a friend or as a physician, by studying to render his conversation generally improving; by discreetly introducing topics adapted for calm and rational discussion, and by occasionally bringing forward, without parade or ostentation, facts in natural history and discoveries in science sufficiently interesting to awaken the curiosity of his hearers, yet not so abstruse as to perplex their understandings." The greater diffusion of scientific knowledge in the present day renders the danger of *perplexing the understanding* of our friends less likely, whilst it gives additional probability to the hope of interesting them. Natural history is, we think, wisely selected for mention in this passage, as it is a study peculiarly adapted to occupy, without unduly exciting, the mind of the chronic invalid or the convalescent patient.

There is a yet deeper and more important exercise of medical influence which remains to be noticed. Visitations of sickness subdue the strongest and soften the hardest, and then, if ever, the soul is open to religious and moral impressions. It is the medical man alone, perhaps, who is permitted to detect the symptoms of the proud heart giving way, the light and trifling spirit sobering into reflection, and the worldly mind looking around for something beyond the present scene. Is he prohibited from efforts to turn these relentings to the eternal advantage of his patient? Is he to turn coldly away, saying, "I have nothing to do but with the body, or at most with present peace of mind." As

this is a subject of peculiar delicacy, we shall adduce the opinions of two eminent men upon it; men, indeed, of different minds, and living in periods of different religious character. The first is that of Gisborne, in his 'Duties of Men.' "Conscience will frequently prompt the physician discreetly to turn the thoughts of the sick man towards religion. Not that the physician is officiously to intrude into the department of the minister of the gospel. But he may often smooth the way for the clergyman's approach; and in those who have been unfortunate enough to imbibe doubts as to the truth of Christianity, he may, in some instances, make a first impression, which the clergyman would in vain have attempted to produce. For the visits of the latter being foreseen, and his professional prejudices suspected, the mind would have previously armed itself against him, and his arguments would have been heard with reluctance and distrust. But the physician labours under no such suspicions. His belief in revelation, though it may be thought absurd, is yet deemed disinterested and sincere. He can select his time and opportunities; he can pursue the subject under various forms, and to a greater or less extent, without allowing his design to become too obvious; and in the earlier stages of disease, while the understanding of the patient is unclouded, and his strength equal to the exertion of temperate discussion, may be able occasionally to lead him into a willing investigation of the evidences and doctrines of the Christian faith, which may terminate in rational and decided conviction." Gisborne wrote about the commencement of the present century, when the times were rife with speculative infidelity; a somewhat different phase of irreligion is that which now meets our notice. It is not so much disbelief of Christianity as a practical disregard of its peculiar character and obligations. We subjoin a few remarks from Dr. Burder's excellent Letters of a Senior to a Junior Physician, on the Importance of promoting the

Religious Welfare of his Patients.* “No one who has witnessed the respect and confidence with which the suggestions of a conscientious physician are received, can doubt of his possessing an almost unlimited influence in the sick chamber. He has become, in truth, the attached friend of the family, to whom they freely unbosom their sorrows and their fears, particularly such as appear to be inducing or aggravating any existing or threatened disease. Hence the medical adviser, having gained an important acquaintance with the mental constitution of the patient, its individual peculiarities and tendencies, and with the varying complexion of thought and feeling which bodily disturbance has been wont to excite, is already prepared to introduce with delicacy and address such incidental remarks in reference to his highest interests as the peculiar condition of the sufferer may naturally call forth, and in the way best adapted to interest and impress, while least likely to endanger that general quietude, on the maintenance of which his recovery may materially depend. Being aware, moreover, of the different aspect in which other topics of practical importance have at various times appeared to his patient, or to persons under similar circumstances, while viewed through the distorting medium of disease, he will not be surprised if the momentous subject of religion should also share, so far as natural effects may be permitted, in the obliquity or indistinctness of the mental vision. The same previous knowledge will often enable him to calculate, with tolerable precision, the degree of influence, whether exciting or depressing, which an allusion to the realities of eternity may be likely to exert on the patient’s bodily frame, and thus to attemper and apportion his suggestions to the particular exigencies of the case. Among the facilities which the profession affords, I cannot but regard as one of the most

* These Letters are now published at Oxford in a separate form.

valuable that arising from the numerous opportunities possessed by the physician of connecting, in the most easy and natural manner, some serious remark with his medical counsel. So intimately, indeed, is the mind united to the body, and so generally does the one sympathise with the sufferings of the other, as constantly to demand a considerable portion of the physician's vigilance and discrimination. He cannot but observe the baneful influence of agitating and corroding emotions in thwarting every healing expedient; and being constrained, therefore, to inculcate the importance of tranquillity, acquiescence, and cheering hope, he is led by the most gentle transition to trace these virtues to the true source of 'every good and perfect gift,' and to the surpassing value and efficacy of the Saviour's peace, and of the hope that maketh not ashamed."

Dr. Burder goes on to remove the notion that such efforts for the religious benefit of the patient are beyond the sphere of the medical attendant, that they are interfering with the province of the minister of the gospel, that they will give offence, &c., and though his remarks do not differ greatly in substance from those already quoted from Gisborne, we give the passage, because it is interesting and instructive to mark the views of different men and different times.

"You have often observed in the moment of danger with what eager, anxious attention the patient listens to every word that falls from his physician. He knows that his friend and counsellor is deeply concerned for his well-being, and can have no interest apart from his. He is aware of the value of professional time, and has experienced the unwearied assiduities which have been exerted for the preservation of his life. Should therefore the physician appear to overstep the precise boundary of his province while touching upon the concerns of immortality, the patient, I am persuaded, will usually regard the solicitude thereby evinced as an additional and gratifying proof of

genuine friendship. The sick man has also the tranquilizing conviction that nothing is likely to proceed from his judicious adviser which would either aggravate the disease or interfere with the salutary operation of remedies. Hence no alarm, no perturbation is induced, while two or three well-adapted hints are gaining a quiet admission into the mind, and affording useful materials for private meditation and inquiry. It may be said that the afflicted patient will not be disposed to listen to the *religious* advice of his physician, considering it as altogether foreign to his department. I believe, on the contrary, that such advice, when tendered with kindness and discretion, will generally be regarded the more highly because it is not professional, because it is *not* a matter of course, but springing spontaneously from the lively interest which the physician feels in the entire welfare of his charge. This view of the subject seems to me quite compatible with the sincerest respect for the labours of a Christian minister in the time of sickness. His invaluable instructions have the weight and sanction of official character, while, from the aptitude afforded by kindred studies and pastoral duties, they may be expected to possess an appropriateness not otherwise attainable. They are held, moreover, in high estimation, because they are regular and ministerial, whereas the religious hints of the physician, as I have before remarked, acquire much of their interest and influence from the very opposite consideration,—from the fact of their being occasional, unexpected, and spontaneous.”

Dr. Burder admirably remarks that the desire to promote the patient’s religious welfare should *never be allowed to interfere with the thorough performance of medical duties*. These, he says, cannot be superseded by any other claims. They are indeed the practitioner’s peculiar calling. He further suggests that the allusions of the physician to the subject of religion should generally be *incidental*,

that they should be *brief*, rather suggesting materials for reflection than entering into fatiguing discussion, and that they should be *attractive* and *encouraging*.

One reason which makes the sick shrink with aversion from any allusions to religion is the common notion that possesses the minds of many, that the person so speaking is actuated by the conviction that they have not long to live, and it seems to them therefore like a sentence of death. This supposed connexion between religion and death is finely noticed by Shakspeare, when he makes the landlady say, in describing the death of Falstaff, "So 'a cried out, God, God, God, three or four times; *now I, to comfort him*, bid him 'a should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet." Nothing can more graphically describe the ignorant notions of many a mind. Now a physician, in offering advice or consolation, often has it in his power to remove this notion, and to manifest that he does not consider religion as confined in its necessity to the dying hour. He will be led by his medical prudence to choose those times when his patient is rather better, and more able to bear a few words beyond mere medical inquiries, and he will endeavour not to speak as if he was pronouncing a death-warrant. All *severity*, *abruptness*, or *superciliousness* of manner should be carefully avoided, and the spirit of gentleness and love be unmistakeably predominant. A medical man will often in the course of his practice be privileged to stand by the dying bed or the sick couch of persons eminent for piety, and to hear beautiful and cheering testimonies to the hopes and consolations which they have experienced, and these passages of his life he may be able to recall, and introduce with delightful effect to excite in the minds of the careless, the repining, or the rebellious sufferer, desires after similar happiness. Many will listen with interest and secret admiration to a simple narration of this

kind, who would shrink from direct and personal exhortation.

In conclusion, we would say that even medically, and as regards the body, the religious state of the soul is not unimportant to the physician, since concealed and corroding fears of death, and consciousness of unpreparedness for it, often lurk in the mind, aggravating disease, and contending against efforts for its removal, and he who could give *true* peace of mind (not a false and delusive peace), would, probably, in many cases increase the facilities of recovery.

Professor Marx, in speaking of the physician's office as friend and guardian of the sick, observes that "he will only be able perfectly to sustain this character so far as he is supported by inward independence, a just self-esteem, and a noble courage." And a little further on he says, "It is a just subject of lamentation when right feeling, and even better judgment, must be sacrificed to a mere anxiety for subsistence." These remarks have a bearing on the whole of the subjects touched on in this Letter. On this topic we can only say, that in proportion as higher ideas obtain of the importance of the medical profession, of its elevated and extensive duties, and the high order of character which it requires for its thorough efficiency, we shall hope to see medical men placed in a position more favorable to the attainment of a manly independence of mind—an independence we acknowledge very difficult to maintain under the constant pressure of the *res angusta domi*. "Scandalous livings," says some one, "make scandalous ministers." "Let all your aims in life," says Junius, "be directed to the attainment of a solid, however moderate, independence—without it no man can be happy, or even honest." Still, however depressing, however degrading to the mind and dangerous to the character may be the influence of narrow circum-

stances, the force of right principles, of rigid and prudent economy, of reliance on the Divine blessing, can and do raise men above them, and enable them to hold a straightforward course, and though the medical man has a right, like other men, to expect to live by his profession, he should ever remember that *it is a profession*—a profession of a high order, and that its rewards are not solely or chiefly pecuniary. “If,” says Simon, “in the exercise of those inferior callings which originate in the social mechanism, a man considers himself freed from all obligations to the common good, and proposes to himself, as the end to be obtained by his labours, his own welfare and that of his family, if even in functions of a higher order, and having to do with more important interests, man, by virtue of his being a man before he was a citizen, may lawfully propose to himself the same end, an imperative duty comes in to place a limit to this right in the case of him who is placed higher in the hierarchy of intelligences, and impose on him obligations more extensive, and proportioned to the power which he has of contributing to the happiness of his fellow-creatures.”

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF HERMAN BOERHAAVE.

Herman Boerhaave, the great medical luminary of the 17th century, was born at Voorhout, a village near Leyden, in the year 1668. His father, James Boerhaave, was the minister of Voorhout. His mother, Hagar Daelder, the daughter of a tradesman at Amsterdam, had, it appears, some turn for the study of medicine, and had gained some little knowledge. She died, however, when her child was only five years old, and her place was supplied by a step-mother, Eve du Bois, the daughter of a minister at Leyden, who faithfully fulfilled towards the children of her predecessor those maternal duties she had assumed upon herself.

Herman Boerhaave was originally designed for the ministry, and, with this view, was instructed by his father in grammar and in classical literature, in which he made great proficiency, till his progress was checked in his twelfth year by one of those apparent calamities which, by their sobering and deepening work on the mind, often prepare the character for future eminence. This calamity was the breaking out of a malignant ulcer on his left thigh, which for five years defied the power of the healing art, as it was then known. From this affliction he gained two things—a feeling sense of the sufferings of the sick, and an experimental conviction of the insufficiency of existing

modes of practice. After all other methods had failed, he cured himself by fomenting the part with salt and urine.

In November, 1682, the father of Boerhaave died, leaving behind him a very slender provision for a widow and nine children. There seemed but little prospect for young Herman to be able to bear the expenses of a learned education ; however, with the consent of his guardians, he continued to study, supporting himself on his small patrimony. He was at this time in a public school at Leyden, where he had gained several prizes, and was within a little of removing to the university. This, however, was, at his own request, delayed six months longer, on account of the complaint in his thigh, and he continued during that time under the care of the master, the learned Wynschoten, and was once more the gainer of a prize. At the university, to which, at the end of the six months, he removed, his genius and industry recommended him to the favorable notice of the learned Wiglandius, afterwards professor of divinity at Leyden, and also, through him, to the friendship and patronage of Mr. Van Apphen.

In 1690, having completed his university studies with the greatest credit, he took his degree in philosophy at the university ; Mead was his fellow pupil. He had by this time exhausted his moderate funds, and found himself compelled to betake himself to some employment which should supply his daily wants, and yet leave him a considerable portion of his time for study. He had a deep knowledge of mathematics, and by lecturing in these sciences to a select number of pupils, he obtained the end he proposed. Though still contemplating the ministry as his calling in life, he had so great an inclination impelling him to the science of medicine, that he undertook the study of the medical writers as a kind of beloved recreation ;

and his interest deepening with the progress of his knowledge, he determined first to make himself a complete master of the art of physic, and then to petition regularly for a licence to preach, and to undertake the cure of souls. On this determination Dr. Johnson remarks, in his *Life of Boerhaave*, “that Providence seldom sends any into the world with an inclination to attempt great things who have not abilities likewise to perform them. To have formed the design of gaining a complete knowledge of medicine, by way of a digression from theological studies, would have been little less than madness in most men, and would have only exposed them to ridicule and contempt. But Boerhaave was one of those mighty geniuses to whom scarce anything appears impossible, and who think nothing worthy of their efforts but what appears insurmountable to common understandings.”

In the study of medicine he began by a diligent perusal of Vesalius, Bartholinus, and Fallopius, in addition to which he attended Nuck’s public dissections, and himself accurately inspected the bodies of different animals. He then directed his attention to the ancient writers, from Hippocrates downwards, devoting especial attention to the works of the great master just mentioned, as the chief source of all medical knowledge. Amongst modern writers, none more engaged his attention than Sydenham, of whom he said that he frequently perused him, and always with the greatest eagerness. In 1693, he took the degree of Doctor of Physic, after a public disputation. “*De utilitate explorandorum excrementorum in ægris, ut signorum.*” He then returned to Leyden, with the full intention of entering the ministry. But Providence had designed otherwise, and made use of a false and malicious report to turn the current of his activity into that channel in which it could be most useful. Whilst sitting in a common passage-boat, or *treickschuyt*, between Leyden and some adjacent place,

several of the passengers were discussing the views of Spinoza, then newly brought before the public, and one person in particular was loud and bitter in his condemnation of them. Boerhaave, though he had on other occasions refuted these views, and though his own opinions were deeply Christian, was yet led by impartial love of justice, calmly to inquire of the speaker whether he had ever read the works of Spinoza. The stranger answered he had not, and should esteem it wicked even to look into them. "How, then," said Boerhaave, "can you pretend to judge of them?" This reproof silenced the declaimer, but a report was circulated by some present that Boerhaave was himself a follower of Spinoza, and from this bigoted and utterly groundless charge obstacles were raised, which barred his entrance into the sacred profession, and threw him of necessity into one only less sacred than that which he had coveted.

Having qualified himself for the practice of physic, he began to visit patients. Of these he had at first but few, and his circumstances were accordingly narrow, but he still persevered, determined that success should not be the result of favour and solicitation, but the reward of solid merit. So devoted was he to duty, that he declined an offer made to him by one of the favorites of King William III to settle at the Hague, preferring rather to have the time and liberty to prosecute his studies. Thus he went on, visiting the sick, studying, making chemical experiments, diving into every mine of medical lore with the utmost diligence, and meditating on the Scriptures, till the year 1701, when he was elected to the office of lecturer on the Institutes of Physic in the University of Leyden. He now began to read lectures with great applause, and his reputation soon spread into distant countries. By the year 1714 he had attained the highest honours in the university, and was also appointed physician

to St. Augustine's Hospital in Leyden. "At this time the new philosophy of Bacon was bearing rule over all men's minds, and the creation of the experimental art had caused physical science to make great advancement, whilst the healing art had but little advanced or profited by the new discoveries. It was overlooked or forgotten that Hippocrates had, from its very origin, applied to it the very philosophy with which the learned were now so enthusiastically occupied. His theory, however, still continued to fluctuate between several dogmas equally remote from the truth. The chemists, who, at the revival of learning in Europe, had overturned the authority of Galen, had to defend themselves against the sects of the Mechanicians and of Bellini, which divided the dominion of medicine between them. In a small portion of Germany alone Stahl brought back men's minds to the judicious doctrine of Hippocrates, attributing all the movements in the animal economy to a force inherent in itself, and different from the general forces of matter; but in adopting a word, the meaning of which was by no means precise, he rendered less general and less salutary the influence which he would otherwise have produced. The first perusal of Hippocrates appears to have carried away Boerhaave; but this physician, endowed by nature with a mind fitted for analysis, comparison, and combination, rather than with a creative and inventive genius, was unable to resist the influence of his age, and, above all, the effect of his early studies. Having been a mathematician and a philosopher before he became a physician, he was constantly carried away by the first object of his labour and research; and being more capable than any one else of detecting the accessory affinities between these sciences and that of man, he ran greater risk of being seduced by them. But as every system, however vicious, has always, along with the facts which it arranges and offers to explain, a point of accord-

ance more or less remote, he thought that the best medical system would be that which should unite and combine all opinions. Forgetting that living bodies are free, during their life, from those movements to which other bodies are imperiously constrained, or at least counterbalance them, and that all the acts which they perform are the result of an activity which is peculiar to them, overlooking, also, that those of the movements of the living economy which most easily admit an application of the law of physics and mechanics, have, nevertheless, as a *primum mobile* the force of life, and only receive from the forces of dead matter an accessory impulse, Boerhaave wished to combine in one and the same theory the vital physiology of Hippocrates, the chemical principles of Sylvius, the mechanism of Bellini, and many other incongruities besides; attributing more, however, to the mechanical and chemical forces, which can never be but accessory, than to the more profound and secret powers of life, which are the principal. Thus the calibre of the vessels adjusted to the dimensions of the globules composing the liquids of the body formed, according to him, the hydraulic relation, on which depended the circulation of the humours, their separation from the blood in the different secretory organs, the morbid congestion of the blood in various fluxions, in humours, inflammations, and the like; and hence he concluded that all the efforts of the physician should be directed to establish this relation, or rather mechanical equilibrium. Nor did he stop even here. To the mechanical hypotheses just mentioned he added others, founded on chemical principles, when, in attempting to explain the causes and the phenomena of diseases, he admitted the formation of pretended acrimonies in the blood, which the physician ought, according to him, to have constantly in view in order to neutralize them—acrimonies which were long famous in the language of the schools, and which are

still found in that of ordinary life. The whole phenomena of diseases, with the spontaneous evacuations by which they are terminated, and which constitute the crisis, find a ready explanation on this vicious system, which seems to offer a reason, when it only mystifies with a word involving a gratuitous hypothesis. In practice, however, theory receives many modifications, and there can be little doubt that in prescribing for patients Boerhaave was more guided by experience and good sense than by the strangely eclectic doctrine to which we have alluded.” *

This system received its final overthrow from Cullen, at Edinburgh, but during the life of Boerhaave it held general sway, and the University of Leyden was the school of Europe for the sciences of medicine, chemistry, and botany. Pupils flocked from all lands around the chair of the great master, and when the Czar Peter executed the noble and original design of *learning*, that he might teach the arts of civilization, he did not think his lessons complete without attending the lectures of Boerhaave. This was in 1715. Even in the Celestial Empire his fame was not unknown, and a mandarin addressed to him a letter with the superscription, “To the illustrious Boerhaave, physician in Europe.”

In 1722 his lectures and his practice were broken in upon by the gout, which confined him for five months to his bed, where he lay motionless on his back, every effort producing such exquisite pain as to deprive him of motion and sense. He was accustomed to say that when he lay whole nights and days without sleep, nothing so effectually alleviated his sufferings as meditation on the subjects he had been wont to study. Five years afterwards he had a violent attack of fever, and the complaint returning at intervals, obliged him to resign his professorships of botany

* Encyclopædia Britannica.

and chemistry, and to lead a more private, but not less useful life, having his time fully occupied with his patients, his pupils, and with an extensive correspondence, letters being addressed to him from all parts of Europe by those who were unable to consult him personally. Though his theory of disease was erroneous, his practice appears to have been highly esteemed, and his sagacity and penetration in detecting maladies were very remarkable. He had a deep sense of medical responsibility, and used to say that where there had been any inattention or negligence the life of the patient would be required at the physician's hands. Conformably to this sentiment, he was very exact and circumstantial in examining the sick.

To his great professional talents were added those qualities of the mind and heart, which enhance and commend them in the moral relations of life; and wisely therefore has Professor Marx closed his series of personal illustrations of medical ethics, by directing our attention to the character of this great man. His appearance was simple, venerable, and, in later life, almost patriarchal. He was a foe to all excess and vicious pleasure, and yet a friend to cheerfulness. He was an eloquent speaker, and a clear and methodical teacher. He soared superior to calumny and detraction, and could never be persuaded to take notice of malicious and slanderous reports. "They are sparks," he used to say, "which will go out of themselves, if you do not blow them." And again: "The surest remedy against scandal is to live it down by perseverance in well-doing, and by praying to God that he would cure the distempered minds of those who traduce and injure us." Being once asked by a friend, who had remarked his great patience under provocations, whether he knew what it was to be angry, this Christian Socrates replied, that he was naturally very quick and hasty in temper, but that by daily prayer

and meditation he had gained the mastery over his passions. His deep sense of religion and his devotional habits constituted the basis of his character, and the springs of all his virtues. It has often been objected, and perhaps not without reason, to the medical profession, that it has proved unfavorable to religion, and the secret ally of infidelity. But that there is no *necessary* connexion between medical science and scepticism, between medical life and ungodliness, may be evident from the example of this great man, the Hippocrates of his time. Early on every morning throughout his busy life he retired for an hour for prayer and meditation on the Scriptures. Here, according to his own avowal, he sought and found strength for the duties of the day, and thus was enabled with vigour and cheerfulness to go through his great amount of daily business. In his hours of relaxation his conversation frequently turned on the excellence of the Christian religion, and the value and authority of the Scriptures, delighting to recommend to others what he so highly prized. Health, he was accustomed to say, must be promoted by the tranquillity of the mind, and he knew of nothing which could support himself or his fellow-creatures in the calamities of life but a well-grounded confidence in God.

At length, in the year 1737, the time drew near that Boerhaave must die. It was in this year that he felt the first approaches of that disorder which was to prove fatal, and of it he thus writes to a friend in London :

“Ætat, labor, corporisque opima pinguetudo, effecerant, ante annum, ut inertibus refertum, grave, hebes, plenitudine, turgens corpus, anhelum ad motos minimos, cum sensu suffocationis, pulsu mirificè anomalo, ineptum evaderet, ad ullum motum. Urgebat præcipuè subsistens prorsus et intercepta respiratio ad prima somni initia ; unde somnus prorsus prohibebatur, cum formidabili strangula-

tionis molestiâ. Hinc hydrops pedum, crurum, femorum, scroti, præputii, et abdominis ; quæ tamen omnia sublata. Sed dolor manet in abdomine, cum anxietate summâ, anhelitu suffocante, et debilitate incredibili ; somno paucò, coque vago, per somnia turbatissimo ; animus verò rebus agendis impar. *Cum his luctor fessus, nec emergo ; patienter expectans. Dei jussa, quibus resigno data, quæ sola amo, et honoro unicè.*” A beautiful example of Christian fortitude and resignation.

About three weeks before his death he was visited by the Rev. Mr. Schultens, in conversation with whom he detailed those reflections on the immaterial nature of the soul to which he had been led during the hours of sickness, when he observed that, however the infirmities of his body might affect his faculties, they were yet unable to deprive his soul of its mastery over itself, or of constant resignation to the pleasure of its Maker. On one occasion, indeed, he lamented that his resignation had failed, and that, after lying fifteen hours in exquisite pain, he prayed for death. To him might well be applied the words of Dr. Moore, in the conclusion of his work, ‘On the Power of the Soul over the Body :’ “The very body, which in health so beautifully obeys us, while the soul seeks only perishing enjoyments, becomes an impediment to our nobler aspirations ; and when the spirit awakes to the consciousness of its infinite capacity, its very efforts to be free tend to burst the bonds of the body, which are felt to be more irksome as the mind grows mature. At length the ruinous condition of the earthly tabernacle strengthens the desire for one that is heavenly and eternal ; and when the body obeys not, then the attentive believing spirit begins to enjoy true liberty in acquaintance with God’s purpose to his creature, and already catching a gleam of glory from beyond the grave, the regenerated man passes through death, and finds it only

one step to enter for ever through that gateway into satisfying and endless life.”

Boerhaave died on the 23d of September, 1738, in the 70th year of his age. The city of Leyden raised a monument to his memory, in the church of St. Peter, with this inscription : *Salutifero Boerhaavi genio sacrum*. The monument consists of an urn, upon a pedestal of black marble, six heads, of which four represent the four ages of life, and two, of the sciences in which Boerhaave excelled, form a group issuing between the urn and its supporters. The capital of this base is decorated with a drapery of white marble, in which are shown the emblems of different diseases, and their remedies. Above, upon the surface of the pedestal, is the medallion of Boerhaave, and at the extremity of the frame, a riband displays his favorite motto :

“ Simplex sigillum veri.”

His principal works are, ‘*Institutiones Medicæ*,’ Leyden, 1708 ; ‘*Aphorismi de Cognoscendis et Curandis Morbis*,’ Leyden, 1709, on which, Van Swieten published Commentaries, in 5 vols. 4to ; ‘*Libellus de Materia Medica, et Remediorum Formulis quæ serviunt Aphorismus* ;’ besides several other treatises.

LETTER TO HERMAN BOERHAAVE.

“ Although it is nearly a century since you belonged to earth, you live in it still, well known and highly honoured. Your name is never pronounced by him who takes a survey of the past history of the healing art without feelings of genuine esteem and thankfulness; your labours in your generation are never mentioned without astonishment and approbation. He who has not a familiar acquaintance with your efforts and labours individually, yet knows in a general way something of their importance and their influence on the present state of medical science, and your motto, “Simplicity is the seal of Truth,” is in the mouths of thousands who do not belong to the profession. This beautiful and characteristic maxim is the proximate cause of this Letter.

“ I am of opinion that earthly action can aim at no higher object than simplicity in thought and deed, and that existence beyond this present world must bring this aim to fuller perfection.

“ The physician, like the surgeon, cannot be too simple. If medical science is not to be considered merely as a part of natural history, in which men are to be studied like plants, their properties and strength to be ascertained, by means of microscopes, chemical reagents, and anatomical knives, for the satisfaction of the curious, but as destined under all circumstances to alleviate suffering, lighten and support life, the grand problem consists in this—to search out humanity in all its aspects, and to adapt all remedies as simply as possible to the doing of good.

“ Since you understood so well how to blend clearness, logical order, and acute perception with simple truth in all your actions and opinions, I would willingly speak to you on several points, which, in spite of the extension of

our knowledge, have not yet attained that plain, regular character in which you would have fixed them.

“ In order to attain perfect correctness, it is, as you may easily conjecture, first of all necessary that we should understand one another’s language, and that this should remain unalterable as regards the conventional symbols for definite objects and ideas ; in our own times, however, we quarrel much about words, and many a one who has to remember in a definition an unimportant improvement, strikes out also a new, singularly-sounding word, thinking he has by that means essentially advanced the matter.

“ In the department in which you were once the head, you would now scarcely know yourself ; the most familiar things would seem to you strange, and even the student would laugh at your ignorance.

“ For fainting, you would hear of *anencéphalohemia* ; for apoplexy, *homæncephalorrhagia* ; for diabetes, *hyperurorrhœa* ; for catarrh, *rhinite* ; * for mental derangement, *cerebria* ; † for inflammation, *hemotelangiosa*. ‡

“ The discovery of a fourth kingdom in Nature is talked of, consisting of animals which have neither vessels nor organs of reproduction, but which are produced by white and fixed, or orange-coloured volatile miasma ; and by closer investigation, it appears that hair, feathers, nails, fungi, and spots may be discerned amongst them. §

“ But you must not judge of the labours of our time from these and similar examples. As Morgagni || loved the simple, so is it still the case with the ablest men, even in

* See for the like, the *Nomenclature Organo Pathologique* of Piorry. *Traité de Diagnostic et de Sémeiologie*, Paris, 1837, 8vo.

† Scipion Pinel, *Physiologie de l’Homme aliéné*, Paris, 1833, 8vo.

‡ J. F. Lobstein, *Essai d’une nouvelle Théorie des Maladies*, Strasburg, 1835, 8vo.

§ Bressy d’Arpajon, *Cours de Miasmatique*, Paris, 1832, 8vo.

|| A. Fabronii, *Vitæ Italorum*, Romæ, 1769, 8vo, p. 328.

respect of the names of objects. It is the novice, not the master, who attaches value to such trifles. The master concerns himself for the kernel, not for the shell, the permanent, not the transitory. The single flower may blow unobserved beside the double, but it is the single alone which produces the seed, the other perishes in its beauty.

“ If in the formal division of the healing art technical terms have increased the difficulties of study, in the real part, the treatment, extraordinary progress has been made towards simplicity. Physicians, surgeons, and accoucheurs, all strive to find out the simplest natural laws, and the most faithful observance of their requirements.

“ Hundreds of drugs which once filled our shops have become useless and obsolete. Multifariously compounded prescriptions now only serve as relics ; regimen is now as much esteemed as therapeutics.*

“ The surgeon now leaves the healing of wounds to an internal process ; balsams, salves, plasters appear to him almost superfluous ; the preservation of a diseased limb obtains for him greater applause than the most skilful amputation.

“ The anxious event of parturition is looked upon with more composure ; there is no hurry to shorten or to end it ; instead of this there is a respect for the efforts of Nature. On this account the accoucheur is less an object of aversion, without any decrease in the modesty of the sex.†

* But yet you, who followed every step of your age with love and diligence, would not have been carried away with the notion which now so many favour, of curing homogeneous diseases with infinitesimal doses of medicine. Among the thirteen positions which you lay down as medical axioms (*Institutiones Medicæ*, Lugd. E. 1721, 8, p. 339, s. 1086) is this : “ *Similibus conservanda similia. Contraria tolluntur contrariis.*”

† In a conversation which the Emperor Joseph had in 1770 with Stephen Wesspremi, he asked (see Baldinger’s *Biography of Medical*

“Corresponding to scientific attainments and customs, the dress and deportment have become more simple. The physician dresses like other people; an imposing personal appearance no longer makes any impression.

“In instruction we have now begun to pay more attention to those things which are necessary and lasting; the exhibition of objects merely curious, the detailing of irrelevant or indelicate anecdotes, have lost their interest.

In proportion as it is perceived that all the circumstances of life, both moral and physical, may be employed for the preservation of health, medical science approaches the problem of giving laws to life; * the schools incite not merely to the investigation of nature, but to the practice of virtue, † and the medical man has to pay attention not merely to what relates to professional study, but to the requirements of ethics. ‡

Men), “*Exercesne tu artem obstetriciam et quo successu?*” The physician answered, “*Fatendum est ingenue, augustissime Domine, me rarius ad parturientes vocari; ita enim sunt pudicæ mulierculæ nostræ, ut mares non facile admittant, nec patiantur sibi a viris auxiliatrices manus admoveri.*” On which the Emperor answered, “*Utinam non essent adeo pudicæ.*”

* J. B. Th. Baumes (*Sur la Nécessité des Sciences dans une Nation libre, et sur leur Connexion avec l’Art de Guérir*. Montpellier, l’An III, p. 36), says, “*L’étude de la médecine a des rapports si étroits avec la législation, puisque l’une mène au bonheur par la pratique de la morale, et que l’autre, en s’occupant de l’homme physique a essentiellement le même but, que perfectionner cette science auguste, c’est multiplier les moyens de donner plus de charmes à la vertu.*”

† Lorentz even remarked, during the French Revolution (*Sur les Qualités, principalement Morales, nécessaires aux Elèves qui entrent dans la carrière de l’art de guérir*. Strasbourg, l’An III, p. 13), that the saying of Montaigne, “*Chez nous il y a beaucoup d’écoles de science, et point de vertu,*” is no longer correct, since the medical schools are such.

‡ A physician is entirely a moral character, and virtue is more particularly an object of his concern than of most other men. (*Observations on the Character of a Physician*. London, 1772, p. 29.)

“Humanity, in the widest signification of the term, is the object which is assigned to the medical profession; its inalienable qualification is to be cautious, indulgent, helpful to others in advice and action.*

“Surgeons who cannot avoid giving pain, study, at least, to mitigate it, to avoid all long preparations for operations, and to perform them with as much safety as celerity.

“The multiplied experiments to prevent pain,† which bear a delightful testimony to the humanity of their authors, will certainly, in the course of time, be crowned with success.

“Already does the chemist also labour to become acquainted with the simple, to resolve things into their elements, and, guided by them, to thread the maze of complex bodies:‡ and how much more does such a problem belong to the physician, who has no other means of rightly comprehending individual existences but through the investigation of simple circumstances and relations, thus estimating the degree of susceptibility and the amount of reaction.

“In the labyrinth of disease he has to hold fast the clue

* Genius, knowledge, and zeal are not sufficient: a physician should also be of a superior and active mind. In Boerhaave was, “*Animus major quam vel ingenium vel diligentia fuit, cum utraque summa essent.*” So it is reported of him by his grateful pupil, Albert von Haller, in the dedication of his works. Haller himself was in this respect great and worthy of imitation. They both deserved what Göethe beautifully says of them. (Works, vol. xxv, p. 342.)

† According to James Moore (*A Method of Preventing or Diminishing Pain in several Operations of Surgery*, London, 1784, 8vo, pp. 21, 25, 34), who had experimented on himself, sensibility vanishes if the nerve leading to a part was pressed for a long time before the operation, and the tourniquet should therefore be applied for an hour or an hour and a half previously.

‡ *Elementum est, ex quo corpus aliquod componitur atque in quod idem ultima divisione resolvitur.* One would think this definition was laid down but lately, but it is Boerhaave’s. (Praelect, Academ. ed. Alb. Haller, 1758, i, 71.)

of its origin, connexion, and course; it is the thread of Ariadne, which conducts him to the light of day. The more intricate the case appears, the more earnestly must he labour to separate the essential from the non-essential, and to discover the simple cause of disturbance.

“The greater his skill, the sooner will he be enabled to guard against and unravel complications.

“In disorders of the mind, where the normal condition of life has disappeared, and an almost inconceivable confusion of feeling, thought, and action has supervened, the physician has not only the original, simple, intellectual stamp of the individual to represent to himself, but once more to reinstate it in a simple type.

“Even in the dying hour it is a benefit, when it can be attained, that life should cease with as little struggle as possible, and, indeed, this is the true euthanasia.

“If the special, by increasing inquiry and daily experience in the endless field of advancing science, serves not merely as the instrument of practical ability, but also to knowledge and judgment, there needs then the sifting union and consolidation of the individual by the exhibition of simple general principles.

“Simplifying is spiritualizing; it is to raise objects to right thought and comprehension.

“The more the materials of observation, as of remedies, increase, the more necessary it is to introduce order and generalization into the whole, which can only be attained by simplicity.

“Thus you proceeded in your efforts, directed to the just and enduring, simply to reduce medicine to the smallest possible quantities, but of well-established ingredients.*

“As long as the mind is wearied with the manifold and

* H. Boerhaave, *Praelect. Acad. ed. Alb. Haller* i, p. 43: “*Medicus Italus misit ad me exiguum libellum, cui titulum fecerat, ‘Picola Arte*

the dissimilar, it will be easily overpowered by the mass. If, however, it succeeds in mastering the leading and governing idea, it soon finds the shortest and nearest way out of the entangled maze.

“A physician whose endeavours are thus directed, will, for the most part, be enabled to maintain composure and clearness of thought in sudden attacks of disease.

“From the complication of pressing symptoms he directs the mental eye to the ascertained, the safe, and certain principles, of diagnosis and treatment; like the Zeus of Homer, who, amidst the clamor of the Trojan combatants, turned his eyes on the peaceful labours of an inoffensive peasantry.*

“The acquirement of such a habit of thinking and acting has an important influence on the whole plan of life.

“Essential objects are then sought for by a straightforward course, devoid of ornaments and outward show; and

Medica. In eo congesta erant in breve compendium, quaecunque indubitatae fidei propositiones apud Medicos possunt pro axiomatibus haberi. Ad idem studium excito vos, quantum possum, auditores, non alia ratione longius proferetis artem.”

* When now the Thunderer on the sea-beat coast
Had fixed great Hector and his conquering host,
He left them to the Fates in bloody fray,
To toil and struggle through the well-fought day;
Then turned to Thracia, from the field of fight,
Those eyes that shed insufferable light,
To where the Mysians form their martial force,
And hardy Thracians tame the savage horse;
And where the far-famed Hippomolgian strays,
Renown'd for justice and for length of days.
Thrice happy race, that, innocent of blood,
From milk innoxious seek their simple food.

POPE's Homer's Iliad, Book xiii.

even the method of speaking corresponds to the simplicity of purpose, and becomes brief and perspicuous. Every one takes it for what it is, it leaves behind it no doubt, no misinterpretation, no mistake.

“The simplest kinds of food are the healthiest. The more sickly the body, the more has it to guard against artificial preparations and high seasoning. Many of the most important cures have been attained through restriction to a diet of the simplest kind. The value of milk, whey, and grapes consists principally in this, that the organism remains for a long time exclusively confined to them.

“Even in morals and manners, the simplest natures are ever the noblest, the strongest. They need no artificial excitement to enliven existence, or to develop their own hidden qualities.

“As in the great circle of existence all happens from small uncomplicated forms and laws, so the higher spiritual existence acknowledges in its impressions and realizations a simple characteristic, whilst it bears on itself the stamp of truth, suggesting and refreshing all minds which come in contact with it. Thus in music, the simple chords please the ear the most; thus the pure light, which penetrates the clear fountain or the transparent crystal, is more refreshing than that which streams through the many-coloured prism.

“The wise man lives, speaks, and acts with simplicity, the fool cannot employ variety enough. Quickness in decision and certainty in action are allied to definitiveness and clearness of expression. For accuracy of perception, and the ability to be at all times free and ready for action, originate thence in an immeasurable degree.

“Our idea of the soul must be as the perfection of simplicity; the highest with which man in his thoughts and deeds, his wishes and knowledge, has to strive, and

which also first imparts the right sanction to the richest internal worth is Simplicity. It is the measure as the test of right, and, as you admirably say, the Seal of Truth.”*

REMARKS ON THE LETTER TO BOERHAAVE.

The closing notes of a musical strain should leave a pleasing echo on the ear, and the last impression of a book like the present should be of the value of moral and religious excellence. Having begun with Stieglitz, our author finishes with Boerhaave.

The point which is singled out in the Letter to Boerhaave, as the basis of remark and amplification, is his remarkable motto—

“Simplicity is the seal of truth.”

In proportion as our aim is *truth, reality*, we shall be in *earnest*, and we shall be *simple*.

Simplicity is stamped upon all the works of God in creation. The normal type of animal life is a simple ovum; the commencement of vegetable life is a simple cell; and from these ova and cells all the varied and complicated forms of vegetable and animal matter emanate. The simple law of attraction holds the earth in its orbit, and determines the motions of the planets; the same law, variously modified, influences the form of every part of the material universe. If we get into the world of mind and spirit, simplicity still meets us; and thus in religion the

* Even in antiquity the saying was valued:

Ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἐστίν.

EURIPID., Phœniss. 472.

Gospel—the Divine plan of salvation—is simple, as Cowper has beautifully sung :

“ Oh ! how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven’s easy, artless, unencumber’d plan :
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile.
From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands, like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.”

The expression of true feeling is simple ; children, and persons under strong excitement, usually speak in simple language. The simplest poetry is ever the most really sublime. Marx has an exquisite illustration of the beauty of simplicity in his instance of the single not the double flower being that which bears the fruit ; and as it is with reference to medical studies, to medical practice, and to medical life that he writes, let us inquire how far in these matters simplicity is indeed the seal of truth.

Medical science, as Professor Marx admirably observes, is not merely a part of natural history ; it is not a field for curious investigation, an arena for the sharpening of men’s wits by ingenious theories and elaborate discussions ; it has a momentous responsibility, an important practical aim, that aim being, under all circumstances, to alleviate suffering, lighten and support life. Its grand problem therefore is, “to search out humanity in all its aspects, and to adapt all remedies as simply as possible to the doing of good.”

It is an important requisite to the right comprehension of any subject, that those engaged in its discussion should understand one another’s language ; and hence Professor Marx justly condemns the wanton introduction of novelties in nomenclature. Pedantry, vanity, and the striving after

superior accuracy of definition, lead to continual and most perplexing changes in nomenclature, greatly thereby multiplying the labours of the student of medicine, who has not only to learn the new name, which will in its time have to give place to the appellative of some still more fastidious describer, but he must also keep its various *aliases* in his memory, or the past labours of medical writers will be a dead letter to him. The valuable work of Mason Good on the Study of Medicine, is a striking example of this evil, and we cannot but regret, that whilst his descriptions are lucid and copious, he should have wasted time in an attempt to impose a new set of names for diseases. Then again, with regard to chemistry, Dr. Graves very justly says, "Let me now advert to a serious inconvenience which the chemists have imposed upon the medical world. They have, it appears, not only assumed to themselves the privilege of naming our medicines, but also of changing those names every five or six years. I find that most chemical substances have, in the space of fifty years, undergone at least five changes. Of course, as the march of chemistry progresses with accelerated speed, we may give our nomenclators credit for an increased tendency to revolutionize the chemical vocabulary, and conclude that they will change them five times within the next fifty years. In 1890, how will a man be able to recognize a substance whose name has undergone ten mutations? *It would almost seem as if some enemy to our profession had invented the chemical nomenclature for the purpose of retarding the advance of practical medicine.* Of what use will a Practice of Physic published in 1800 be to the reader who peruses it in 1900? We all know how easily the mind of man is deterred from difficulties; how few there are who will submit to the labour of becoming genealogists in chemical names." These remarks are well worthy of attention, particularly as they

show the *moral* bearing of the subject, in clogging those sciences connected with medicine with unnecessary difficulties, and thus tending to introduce and perpetuate dangerous mistakes. "What is the use of a name?" inquires Dr. Graves. "To designate a thing—to point out any substance, so that when we call for it we may get *it*, and nothing else. This is all that is necessary. When you tax a name beyond this, you exceed the limits of ordinary language, and demand too much. The old names for our medicines are not inferior in this respect to the modern ones imposed on us by chemists. Tartar emetic is a good and significant name, and yet I perceive it has been altered several times before, and again in the last edition of the 'London Pharmacopœia.' Why is it that the preparation of bismuth used in pyrosis has been three times changed in my own memory? What alterations have not the carbonates of iron and alkalies undergone? As for Fowler's solution, Corrosive sublimate, Mindererus' spirit, and Æthiop's mineral (all good standard names), they are now nearly extinct, and have been superseded by a new generation, likely to prove as unstable as their predecessors. Many other substances have undergone the same fate." The names of plants have largely partaken in these mutations, and, unfortunately, change has not been on the side of simplicity or of brevity. "What was formerly called *stilozobium* has successively become *dolichos* and *mucuna*, while Iceland moss has been changed from *lichen* into *cetraria*, and *secale cornutum* into *acinula clavus*. *Uva ursi* is now preceded by the prænomen *aretostaphyllos*, and our old acquaintance, *jalap*, deprived of its euphonious prefix, *convolvulus*, has degenerated into *ipomea*." * Marx pointedly says, "It is the novice, not the master, who attaches value to such trifles. The master

* Graves.

concerns himself for the kernel, not for the shell, the permanent, not for the transitory.”

From nomenclature the Letter proceeds to touch on practice, and our author acknowledges that, whilst there has been a departure from simplicity in the former, there has been an approximation to it in the latter; and he instances the greater simplicity in modern practice, of prescriptions of surgical treatment and of obstetric practice, and proceeds to notice the greater prominence now given to *moral* and *hygienic* measures in medicine. Amongst the thinking part of the profession there is, it is well known, a feeling in favour of the adoption of a rational system of hygiene and regimen in preference to active therapeutics. It is becoming better understood, that many diseases run a natural course, and terminate in a particular manner; and that the most that art can do is to watch their progress, and place the system in that position in which the malady is likely to terminate favorably.

“The long peace, and the general intercourse of nations consequent thereon, have permitted every country to know what every other country possesses. British medicine has thus profited considerably, and most especially by the importation of some of the humbler notions and milder practices of our continental neighbours. In the treatment of acute diseases we have attained somewhat nearer to the heroic virtue of patience, from an increased knowledge of the morbid processes going on. In chronic disorders we have become more regimenal and less druggish; in all cases, perhaps, we have grown a little more trustful of Nature, and a little less trustful of art.”*

The question which is now frequently present to the mind of the medical man, is when to employ active therapeutics, and when to trust to the powers of Nature. Hence it behoves him to exercise all the force of his mind, all the

* British and Foreign Medical Review, Jan. 1846.

lights of observation and experience, to determine this question aright. The tendency of the human mind is always to extremes ; the summit of the hill is no sooner gained than there is a tendency to rush down in an opposite direction with dangerous velocity, and thus, from a blind reliance upon the efficacy of remedial agents, we may find ourselves landed in an equally blind reliance on "expectant medicine." If the practice of medicine is a *moral action*, a medical man should beware of *hobbies*, for should he chance to ride his too far, the life of another may be the sacrifice.

Marx says, "In proportion as it is perceived that all the circumstances of life, both moral and physical, may be employed for the preservation of health, medical science approaches the problem of giving laws to life." It thus becomes, therefore, an almost indispensable duty for a medical man to inform himself on the subjects connected with the preservation of public health and the prevention of disease. In the place where he resides he should take pains to study the various peculiarities of climate, natural influences, tendencies of the prevailing occupations and habits of life of the inhabitants, &c. &c. ; and in his intercourse with his patients he should endeavour to lead them to form just views on these subjects, and to urge them not to set at nought established natural laws, but to look to *prevention* as well as to *cure*. Few persons, unless their attention has been especially called to the subject, can have an idea of the amount of ignorance which exists even amongst the educated classes on these subjects. People may be found who have the power of choice, living for years, perhaps the greater part of their lives, in houses where imperfect drainage, the absence of due ventilation, exposure to miasmatic influences, &c., keep up a constant succession of invalids in their family, and spending yearly sums in medical attendance, all the time wondering why they are so sickly.

Amongst the poorer classes the same evils are frightfully developed. The cholera brought to light in Edinburgh cases in which pigs were kept in the rooms of many houses on the upper stories, and some of them had grown so large that they could not be brought down alive; this, too, in a city where typhus fever is almost continually endemic. We hope ere long that the inquiry into and the remedying these evils will be undertaken by persons legally appointed for the purpose; but until this takes place, the task of observing such matters, and making them known to the public and to proper authorities, falls almost exclusively on the medical profession, and most nobly in most cases have they stood forward in the work of philanthropy wherever the poor have been concerned; they have been at all times the most strenuous advocates of better and more airy dwellings, of more nourishing food, &c.; it is their representations principally which have at length excited the richer classes to take into consideration the case of the poor, and taught them to feel that their own health is intimately connected with that of their indigent brethren. Amongst those who have merited most highly of humanity in this respect may be named our old teacher, the noble-minded Professor Alison, of Edinburgh.

He whose practice is limited to seeing patients and prescribing so many draughts, as if all the science of medicine was comprised in swallowing nauseous drugs, is a practitioner ill fitted for the times in which we live. "Humanity, in the widest signification of the term," as Marx justly says, "is the object assigned to the medical profession," and nothing which affects the moral habits or the physical habits of a people is beyond its sphere, since all has an influence on health and disease. Simon says, in speaking of the condition of the labouring classes, "We cannot directly act upon the sufferings (of artisans); the effects of a prudent prophylactic are paralysed by the demands of a pitiless cupidity; but let us not the less hold out a beacon

to public attention with regard to the consequences of the abuse of public strength. Opinion has often been led astray on this point: some, interested to keep the evil out of sight, have softened their descriptions; others, with an intention not less reprehensible, have overcharged the picture;—let us avoid both of these rocks; let us tell the truth without weakness and without passion. By this slow but sure method—sure because it is based on positive grounds—we shall at length enlighten the public on a variety of questions, which must be brought forward publicly, and resolved on the side of humanity.” These questions we can but indicate; they embrace the hours of labour, the employment of children, the food of the poor, their dwellings, the healthiness or unhealthiness of particular trades, the facilities of emigration, the morals of our cities, &c. &c.

After instancing several departments in medical science in which simplicity is capable of introduction, Professor Marx says, “ Even in the dying hour it is a benefit, when it can be attained, that life should cease with as little struggle as possible; and, indeed, this is the true euthanasia.”

Dr. Ferriar* observes that the sufferings of persons in the last stage of death are often aggravated by the prejudices and indiscretion of their attendants. It is well known to every one who has had much experience, that this is actually the case, and therefore it is the duty of a medical man to look carefully into the cases that come under his observation, and to take care that the dying patient shall not be abandoned to the care of those whose officious folly or unfeeling indifference are likely to distress the last moments. If there are no affectionate and intelligent relatives in attendance, he will endeavour as far as possible to supply their place, and to protect the patient against every species of suffering but that which is inevi-

* Medical Histories and Enquiries, London, 1792.

table. "How could the physician," says Simon, "who nourishes in his heart a sentiment of humanity, abandon a patient who places upon him his last hope, and upon whom will probably be his last thought? No, that would be unjustifiable; for the practice of medicine, as we have already said, is not only a mere mental pursuit, but it is at the same time a profession of benevolence; therefore none engaged in it could misconceive his sacred duty to the dying. It is doubtless impossible for the physician, compatible with his duty to his other patients, to remain for hours together near the bed of the dying, but it is always possible to pay some delicate attentions to such a patient; to see him more frequently than usual, to manifest an anxiety to serve him, visiting him before the accustomed hour, in the same manner as if the fatal event was as yet distant."

Professor Marx then proceeds to say that the habitual cultivation of simplicity has an important influence on the whole of life; that it affects the language, the morals, and the manners.

There can be no doubt that the single element of simplicity of purpose, the simple aim to do our duty, the simple reliance upon Divine support and guidance, would strike at the root of all the faults and follies observable in manners and deportment, and would go further towards forming an easy and agreeable address than all the maxims of Chesterfield. For what is it that most frequently renders the manners of persons disagreeable? It is something which arises from the hidden root of *self-seeking*; either affectation, pedantry, egotism, self-sufficiency, assumption, or superciliousness. What is it that imparts a charm and a dignity to the manners of the Quakers, but simplicity, their truthfulness, the absence of all attempts to exalt self?

The time is past when a peculiar mode of dress and an assumed formality and gravity of deportment were thought desirable and becoming in the physician, but at

the same time we feel that a light frivolous manner, foppishness in dress, or anything, in short, that betrays a mind too much intent upon trifles, is unsuitable to the medical character, and betrays a cast of mind the reverse of what we would wish to discover in the guardian of our health. On the other hand, slovenliness, or anything approaching to neglect of personal cleanliness, is an odious fault in a medical practitioner.

Gregory, after some remarks on the adoption of a peculiar dress amongst physicians, now obsolete, gives the following judicious advice, which is as suitable to our age as it was to his: "A physician should carefully guard against any little peculiarities stealing into his manners, which can in any degree render him an object of ridicule; young physicians, in particular, will much deceive themselves if they imagine they can indulge in such peculiarities with the same impunity that their seniors sometimes do. It is, indeed, an observation which perhaps does no great honour to mankind, that when once a physician's reputation for knowledge in his profession comes to be thoroughly established, almost every peculiarity of manner, even some that would be in other men offensive, deepen the impression made on the imagination by his supposed merit, and increase his popularity and fame." Here we may remark that though it is perfectly true that eccentricities have sometimes tended to advance a man's reputation, they are in themselves, if natural, an imperfection in the character, and if affected, they are a contemptible form of quackery. The same writer continues: "There is great impropriety in a physician's indulging himself in a certain delicacy, which makes him liable to be disgusted with some disagreeable circumstances he must unavoidably meet with in his practice. Genuine delicacy is a virtue of the mind, and though it shows itself by an attachment to cleanliness, neatness, and even elegance, where it can be

afforded, yet it always gives place and forgets itself where duty or the interests of humanity require it."

Volumes might be written on manners and dress, and the minor morals of life, and after all nothing be elicited more truly valuable than the following passage from the Lectures of Sir Benjamin Brodie. "It is not he who is fashionable in his dress, expensive in his habits, fond of fine equipages, pushing himself into the society of those who are his superiors in their worldly station, that is entitled to that appellation. It is he who sympathizes with others, and is careful not to hurt their feelings, even on trifling occasions; who in small things, as well as in great, observes that simple but comprehensive maxim of our Christian faith, 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you;' who in his intercourse with society assumes nothing which does not belong to him, and yet respects himself; this is the kind of gentleman which a medical practitioner should be."

There are some pithy remarks in the Aphorisms bearing on the subject of manners: one is, "The physician must, like the diplomatist *tread softly*." This is true in a metaphorical sense as to caution in practice, but it is also true in a literal sense; for a noisy, bustling manner, a loud, coarse voice, and a heavy, *lumbering* tread, are generally disadvantageous to a medical man.

Another of the Aphorisms is, "Bashfulness is as incurable as hydrophobia." A great deal of apparent bashfulness, what the French call *mauvaise honte*, may perhaps be set down to the account of *vanity*, and would be cured by a greater simplicity of character—

"True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks, through fear,
Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed to appear.
Humility, the parent of the first,
The last by vanity produced and nursed."

COWPER.

There is, however, a real bashfulness which is exceedingly distressing, and which often becomes a serious obstacle in a man's way. It is sometimes the result of natural character, and sometimes of circumstances. A man who has been brought up in a confined sphere of society, is apt, if transplanted out of it, to fall into one of two errors, according as his temperament inclines to boldness or timidity. Either he is apt to fancy he knows more than any one else, and hence to be offensively forward and assuming, or else he is apt to fancy every one else knows more than he does, and he becomes bashful, constrained, and unduly deferential. There are some judicious observations on this subject in the 'British and Foreign Medical Review,' July, 1846. "*Omnibus ornatum excellere rebus* should be the motto of a medical man striving after excellence; for if sound, solid learning be not accompanied by the knowledge of a man of the world, and the habits and manners of a gentleman, it will become tainted with pedantry, and its use be confined principally to the closet, and thus be far less likely to enhance the success of its possessor. The social pleasures of the evening need never interfere with the business and study of the day, and, *enjoyed in moderation*, are useful in affording relaxation to the mind, and in forming manners which give a lustre to knowledge, adorn it, and prepare a path for its progress. Most people must have seen genuine merit obscured by the want of a little of the polish acquired by refined social intercourse. Men of solid acquirements, in the presence of patients much their superiors in position, are sometimes, on this very account, awkward and disconcerted, uncertain what to do, what questions to put, or what replies to give, and either become disagreeably forward in their efforts to overcome their shyness, or so confused that they cannot readily apply their knowledge, and the confidence of the patient is lost. This is, no doubt, often the true source of the complaints we

hear of ignorant and unworthy persons being high in public estimation, while merit is neglected, unrewarded, or oppressed. We believe that transcendent merit must naturally triumph over all obstacles, but unless it be of this commanding order, it will not serve in the choice between a nervous, timid, or ill-bred man, and his collected, easy, agreeable, though perhaps less learned rival."

The Letter concludes with again declaring the value of simplicity as that which imparts a sanction to real worth, and is the seal of truth. May we then learn to be simple; simple in our *object*, simple in our *views*, simple in our *practice*, simple in our *habits*, simple in word and deed. But whilst we aim at simplicity, let us take care that we have truth for our foundation; for many systems and theories are apparently very simple, but being based on insufficient evidence, they are wanting in the important element of truth. There is no doubt but that truth is in itself always simple, but in our limited knowledge we may not be able to grasp it in its entirety, and therefore to perceive its simplicity, and may mistake for it some specious counterfeit which appears to bear a simple aspect.

Thus has Acesius led us to view Medical life in some of its most interesting Moral Aspects, and we cannot better describe the impression we wish to leave on the minds of our readers than in the following passages: the first from the Memoir of William Allen, of Plough Court, the last from Dr. Watson's introductory lecture on the practice of physic.

"The profession you have assumed," says William Allen to his pupils, "is one of the most respectable of which man is capable. Having carefully studied the nature of our frame, you have undertaken to soften the miseries to which it is liable. May you, though in an inferior degree, endeavour to imitate the great example of Him, who went

about doing good, healing all manner of diseases. In a world so full of woe, to a noble and generous mind, the opportunity of smoothing the brow of care, and drying up the tears of sorrow, are the most gratifying offices which it is called upon to fulfil. Upon you will the anxious eye of the maternal head of a family be fixed in all the anguish of grief, while the support of herself and helpless infants is stretched upon the bed of languishing; and if poverty be added to her affliction, I trust you will rise nobly superior to sordid views, and find your richest recompense in the approbation of your own minds, in the sweet satisfaction of attempting at least to diminish the weight of that misery, which perhaps, from the nature of things, you cannot wholly remove.

“ If gentleness of manners and polite behaviour be esteemed ornamental in society at large, it is more indispensably requisite in the medical character. It is natural for the human mind to associate with this character the idea of power, and what can be more soothing to those under affliction than to meet with power and benevolence combined in the medical man?

“ I am aware that in the line of your profession you will be sometimes placed in difficult and delicate circumstances, but never, I entreat you, sacrifice your sense of propriety, your feeling of the eternal obligation of right and wrong, that on which your present and future peace of mind depends, to any prospect of sinister advantage. Consider only what it is your *duty* to do, and leave the consequences to Him who never fails to approve every honest endeavour to perform it. So will you in your different circumstances be the instruments of most extensive good; you will be a blessing to your country, and honoured by those whose good opinion is of value.” *

* Memoirs of William Allen.

“The subjects with which we have to deal,” says Dr. Watson, “are not matters of mere speculative curiosity or intellectual amusement, they involve questions of life and death. Amidst all its responsibilities the profession is a noble profession, and worthy the devotion of a lifetime. Trials, no doubt, belong to it, and difficulties, but it has also privileges and immunities peculiar to itself. Affording ample scope and exercise for the intellect, it is conversant with objects that tend to elevate the thoughts, to chastise the feelings, and to touch the heart. It brings beneath our minute and daily notice that most remarkable portion of matter which is destined for a season to be the tabernacle of the human spirit, and which, apart from that singularly interesting thought, excites increasing wonder and admiration the more closely we investigate its marvellous construction. The sad varieties of human pain and weakness with which our daily vocation is familiar, should rebuke our pride while they quicken our charity. To us are intrusted, in more than ordinary measure, opportunities of doing good to our afflicted fellow-creatures—of showing love to our neighbour. Let us beware how we idly neglect, or selfishly abuse, a stewardship so precious, yet so weighty. The profession of medicine, having for its end the common good of mankind, knows nothing of national enmities, of political strife, of sectarian dissensions. Disease and pain the sole conditions of its ministry, it is disquieted by no misgivings concerning the justice and honesty of its client’s cause, but dispenses its peculiar benefits without stint or scruple, to men of every country and party and religion, and to men of no religion at all. And like that quality of mercy, of which it is the favorite handmaid, it blesseth him that gives and him that takes, reading continually to our own hearts and understandings the most impressive lessons, the most solemn warnings. It is ours to know in how many instances, forming indeed a vast majority of the whole, bodily suffering and sickness are

the natural fruits of evil courses; of the sins of our fathers, of our own unbridled passions, of the malevolent spirit of others. We see too the uses of these judgments, which are mercifully designed to recall men from the strong allurements of vice, and the slumber of temporal prosperity; teaching us that it is good for us to be sometimes afflicted. Familiar with death in its manifold shapes, witnessing from day to day its sudden stroke, its slow but open siege, its secret and insidious approaches, we are not permitted to be unmindful that our own stay also is short and uncertain, our opportunity precarious, and our time, even when longest, but scanty, if measured by our moral wants and intellectual desires.

“Surely, gentlemen,” he continues, “you will not dare, without adequate and earnest preparation, to embark in a calling like this, so capable of good if rightly used, so full of peril to yourselves and to society if administered ignorantly or unfaithfully. And even when you have made it, as you may, the means of continual self-improvement, and the channel of health and ease to those around you, let not the influence you will thus obtain beget an unbecoming spirit of presumption; but remember, that in your most successful efforts you are but the honoured instruments of a superior power; that, after all, IT IS GOD THAT HEALETH OUR DISEASES AND REDEEMETH OUR LIFE FROM DESTRUCTION.”

With such sentiments and such teachers, well may we affirm, with the writer quoted by Marx,* that the medical schools are schools of virtue, yea, of religion also, and more and more may they be so, since the Christian alone can fully satisfy the requirements of Medical Ethics, for he alone can truly appreciate “*ce que vaut la vie de l’homme.*”

* See page 328, note.